

MUSLIMS AND THE CONGRESS



**Jawaharlal Nehru, with M. A. Ansari and
another Congress volunteer in 1928.**

MUSLIMS AND THE CONGRESS:

Select Correspondence of Dr. M.A. Ansari 1912-1935

Edited by
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TO MY MOTHER

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INTRODUCTION

I consider the brotherhood of man as the only tie, and partition based on race or religion are, to my mind, artificial and arbitrary

M.A. Ansari

Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari was born in December 1880 in a prominent family of Yusufpur¹ in the Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh. His father, Abdur Rahman, was a judicial Amin at Basara in Ballia district and, like most government servants of the day, he remained loyal to the British in 1857.² In return for his loyalty, he received a small *jagir* near Yusufpur.

Ansari's brothers, Abdul Wahhab, familiarly known as 'Hakim Nabina', and Abdur Razzak, were educated in the Islamic branches of learning. Later they specialised in the *unani* system of medicine and achieved fame as *hakims*. Abdul Wahhab had studied at the dar al-ulum in Deoband and was a *murid* of its co-founder, Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, while Abdur Razzak was a close friend and adviser of Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, Principal of the dar al-ulum and one of the leading pan-Islamic agitators. These family connections with the Muslim divines³ enabled Ansari, who was himself a disciple of Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, to mobilise support for the Khilafat cause in the early 1920s, to act as an effective link between the *ulama*

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and the Western-educated Muslims, and to cement the alliance between the two.

Ansari, unlike his two elder brothers, received a modern, secular education. He attended the Queen's Collegiate School, Benaras, and the Muir Central College, Allahabad, before joining the Nizam College in Hyderabad. Here he won a state scholarship to study medicine in the United Kingdom. At the age of twenty-one, the young Ansari sailed for London, being the first member of the family to cross the seas. He eventually completed his studies at the University of Edinburgh and took the degree of Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery. He remained in the United Kingdom for a few more years to serve as Resident Medical Officer in the Charing Cross Hospital, as House Surgeon in the Lock Hospital, and as Clinical Assistant at St. Peter's Hospital, all of London. He was the first Indian to have won such a distinction.

In London, Ansari had a wide circle of friends which included Jawaharlal Nehru with whom he established a life-long friendship, the poet, Mohammad Iqbal, and Atiya Fyzee, a well known member of the Tyabji family.⁴ He had enough money to invite friends to teas and dinners and afford a Nawabi style of living. It seems he was not interested in the social and political controversies of the day, because there is no evidence of his involvement with certain political groups and associations which in those days attracted many educated Indians. It is therefore not surprising that his contemporaries in London later did not retain any vivid impression of him.

On his return to India in 1910, Ansari set up his practice first in Calcutta, but later moved to Delhi on the advice of Ali Imam and the Raja of Mahmudabad, who saw better prospects for the young doctor in the newly established capital of British India. Ansari now gradually established himself. According to Abdur Razzak, who had generously supported Ansari during his stay in London, 'I had to set him up in Delhi and sent him several thousand rupees for this, but he soon started well and I had no more need to send him money'.⁵ In his capacity as a medical adviser to the princes of Rampur, Alwar, Bhopal and Joara, Ansari drew a handsome remuneration and lived in great style and comfort at the 'Dar-us-Salam' (abode of Islam or peace) in Daryaganj, New Delhi. This elegant and impressive resi-

dence soon became the venue of many important meetings. The numerous Congress Conferences, and especially those during the Gandhi-Irwin talks, were held here. The Dar-us-Salam was a counterpart to Motilal Nehru's famous Allahabad residence, Anand Bhavan.

Until 1911, Ansari gave no evidence of his interest in Indian politics. The Balkan Wars, however, brought him to the forefront of public life and carried him to national fame and influence. He, perhaps unexpectedly, found himself as the leader of a Medical Mission to Constantinople,⁶ a position which enabled him to establish close links with leading Muslim figures in north India and to leave his mark as a brilliant organiser. The idea of a Medical Mission, which was the brainchild of the volatile editor of the *Comrade*, Mohammad Ali, elicited much public sympathy and support in India. Its success received wide publicity, and its leader, Ansari, gained the adulation of many of his co-religionists. 'In Muslim circles', observed Meston, the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces, 'he commands considerable support, and the moderate men regard him much more highly than, for example, Mohammad Ali or those who have been most recently interned. His work in the Mission during the last Turkish War is a matter of pride to them, as well as the professional position he occupied in India'.⁷ So it was as a leader with an already established reputation—as a politician, a doctor and an able organiser—that Ansari was elected President of the Home Rule League in 1917.⁸ This was no mean achievement for a comparatively new figure in Indian politics. Many would have wished to occupy the position held by Ansari.

In December 1918, Ansari was invited to chair the reception committee of the Muslim League session held in Delhi. During those years, the League was controlled by a group of Western-educated Muslims whose efforts were directed towards promoting rapprochement between the Congress and the Muslim League. In December

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1916, the two bodies concluded a political agreement, popularly known as the Lucknow Pact, which ushered in a period of Hindu-Muslim fraternisation.⁹ Ansari chose the League platform to echo the sentiments of most Indian politicians and, in a stirring speech, which was proscribed by the government, he lashed at the repressive policies of the British officials, deplored the slow pace of constitutional reforms, and reiterated the constitutional demands embodied in the Lucknow Pact. He also voiced the growing concern of his co-religionists over the safety of the Holy Places and the future of their custodian, the Sultan of Turkey. He warned his audience that Turkey was in imminent danger of being dismembered, and demanded that its Sultan should retain control of the Holy Places in the *Jazirat-ul-Arab*, which included the whole of Arabia, Palestine and Mesopotamia. He further appealed to the principle of self-determination in demanding that the integrity and independence of the existing Muslim states should be maintained intact.

Ansari's speech, we are told, was 'widely read and by now every Musulman knows that the Holy Places are going out of the hands of the Musulman sovereign and that the English are responsible'.¹⁰ This was not all. Contemporaries were greatly impressed with his bold and emphatic articulation of India's political demands, and saw in him a forceful champion and spokesman of their interests. Owing to his growing influence and prestige, Gandhi cultivated his friendship¹¹ and sought his support in the agitation against the Rowlatt Act, which was enacted by the Government of India to suppress 'political crime' in the country. Ansari responded enthusiastically and, like a disciplined soldier, fell in line behind Gandhi's programme. His participation in the Rowlatt Satyagraha was the result of his personal devotion to the Mahatma as well as to his conviction that the Rowlatt Act was morally and politically reprehensible. In Delhi, where Ansari was President of the Satyagraha Sabha founded in March 1919, the Rowlatt Satyagraha began on 30 March 1919, and the hartal on that day was widely observed by a cross section of the population.¹² This newly acquired experience in agitational politics proved to him of

great value during the Khilafat movement, which dominated Indian politics from 1919 to 1922.

The Khilafat movement was launched in India with the object of exercising pressure on the British Government to prevent the disintegration of Turkey and to maintain the independence of *Jazirat-ul-Arab*. In March 1919, the Central Khilafat Committee, with its headquarters in Bombay, was founded for this purpose. Its aim was not only to secure a just and honourable peace for Turkey but also the fulfilment of the pledges given by the British Prime Minister in his speech of 5 January 1919.¹³ The next important stage in the development of the Khilafat agitation was the observance of 19 March as the Khilafat Day; and on that day Gandhi, who had gone further than most Hindus in public life to work with Muslims, announced that he would launch a Non-cooperation movement if the Turkish Peace Treaty did not satisfy the Indian Muslims. Accordingly, when the peace terms were announced in May 1920, the All-India Khilafat Committee adopted Gandhi's non-cooperation programme. On the 2nd June, at the Mahatma's suggestion, an all-parties conference was held at Allahabad, which decided upon a policy of non-cooperation, and appointed a committee to draw up a programme. On 1 August, the Khilafat Committee organised a *hartal* and entrusted Gandhi with the leadership of the Non-cooperation movement. The Mahatma launched the movement by surrendering his titles and decorations to the government. 'Valuable as these honours have been to me', he wrote to the Viceroy, 'I cannot wear them with an easy conscience so long as my Musulman countrymen have to labour under wrong done to their religious sentiments'.¹⁴

Ansari was actively associated with the major policy decisions of the Central Khilafat Committee, and worked in close cooperation with leading Khilafatists, including Maulana Abdul Bari of Firangi Mahal, Hakim Ajmal Khan, and the Ali Brothers, who were released from prison at the end of 1919. He helped to distribute the *istifta* (questionnaire) issued by Abdul Bari in January 1918, went to England as a

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member of the Khilafat delegation,¹⁵ and on his return presided over the Khilafat Conference at Gaya in December 1922. On 20 March 1922, he and Ajmal Khan published a manifesto setting out the Khilafat demands of Indian Muslims.¹⁶

Ansari thus played a major part in whipping up support for the Khilafat cause and in articulating the feelings of his co-religionists. He was, like most Muslims of his time, profoundly stirred by the Khilafat question and was swept by the mass upsurge following the launching of the Non-cooperation movement.¹⁷ But, unlike many of his militant colleagues and friends, such as the Ali Brothers, Hasrat Mohani¹⁸, and a section of the *ulama*, he exercised a moderating influence over the deliberations of the Khilafat Committee, and often persuaded them from taking a less drastic course. His aim was to woo them away from violence and to dissuade them from making statements which were likely to alienate the Hindus from the Khilafat movement. He realized, quite rightly, that the adherence of leading Hindu Congressmen, particularly Gandhi, was a priceless asset to the

Khilafat agitation, and it could only be retained by submitting to his leadership and accepting the Congress decisions. That is why, when the *ulama* tried to commit the Central Khilafat Committee to civil disobedience without the Congress, Ansari and Ajmal Khan opposed them on the grounds that the Muslims could not win such a campaign by themselves.¹⁹ They had earlier thwarted a similar move at the Central Khilafat Committee and *Jamiat-ul-ulama* sessions in September 1921. Considerable friction occurred before Ansari and Ajmal Khan could persuade the *ulama* to accept that Gandhi, 'the recognised leader of all Indians, considered that the time was not yet ripe for civil disobedience'.²⁰ The enraged *ulama* were temporarily mollified.

There was another reason why Ansari was anxious not to antagonise the Hindus. He firmly believed that the Khilafat movement, which had helped the cause of Hindu-Muslim amity, provided a unique opportunity to strengthen the alliance between the two communities. So, he was not prepared to allow his colleagues to stand in the way of communal harmony. From 1919 onwards, he assiduously cultivated friendship with influential Hindus and tried to dispel from their minds the fear of mob violence resulting from the Khilafat movement. At the same time, as President of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee, he called for a united Hindu-Muslim front against the Raj. On 16 March 1920, a few months before he actually joined the group of 'no-changers', Ansari had suggested that the Congress and Muslim League leaders jointly form the 'Congress-League Party' to contest the forthcoming elections, to be held under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, in the month of November of that year.²¹ But his plan fell through, because, after Gandhi decided to suspend civil disobedience in March 1922, much to the chagrin of his Muslim allies, the alliance between the Khilafatists and the Congress crumbled. The spectre of communalism stalked the land and many of Ansari's friends and colleagues fell a victim to it.

The Khilafat movement, according to Halide Edib, the famous Turkish author, produced two curiously contradictory results: that of uniting the Hindus and Muslims around a common activity, and that of dividing them.²² This was a correct observation. Between 1916 and 1921, the Hindu-Muslim *entente* was one of the notable features of

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Indian politics. But, by the end of 1922, the warmth of Hindu-Muslim rapprochement gradually cooled off. This was mainly because a number of groups with divergent and often conflicting aims were held together not because they had a common cause to unite for, but because it suited their interests for the time being. But every step in the progress of non-cooperation split them up into various factions. Many leading politicians, who were eager to work the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, extricated themselves from the travail of non-cooperation and strayed into the new councils;²³ others drifted into the muddle of communal politics. The erstwhile champions of communal alliance, the architects of the Congress-League concord, and the vociferous non-cooperators encouraged factionalism in politics, disrupted the anti-colonial struggle, and facilitated the growth of communalism.

After the suspension of civil disobedience, Muslims had yet another surprise in store. On 21 November 1922, the Turkish National Assembly at Ankara decided to separate the Khilafat from the Sultanate. And since the maintenance of the temporal power of the Khalifa was one of the main objects of the Khilafat agitation, this action, by a purely Muslim body, completely took the wind out of its sail. In March 1924, the final and deadly blow was struck by Mustafa Kamal Pasha who abolished the Khilafat altogether and expelled the Khalifa from the Turkish territory. Although Ansari and a few others bore the shock of the abolition of the Khilafat with equanimity²⁴, most Indian Muslims were stunned by this 'gross breach of religious injunctions'.²⁵ Their dream world crashed upon their heads and they could not do anything except to raise loud voices of protest. But they were merely crying in the wilderness. The Turkish authorities simply ignored them. The intransigent Mohammad Ali sought to keep the Khilafat agitation going in order to exert pressure on the Turks, but his colleagues saw no sense

in fighting for a lost cause.²⁶ The institution of Khilafat was dead and it was never to be revived again. The Khilafat protest in India lost its *raison d'etre* and the Khilafat Committees struggled to survive during the next few years.

Just as the Khilafat Party disrupted and disintegrated after the abolition of the Khilafat, so did the various Muslim groups who had been temporarily united for a common religious cause. The collapse of the Khilafat movement destroyed the edifice of Muslim unity and, not surprisingly, brought to surface all the latent divisions and tensions amongst them. In the words of Khaliquzzaman:

The history of the next sixteen years of Muslim India is a mass of confusion and a chapter of political benightedness. The disruption of the Khilafat organisation was like a breach in the embankment of the flowing stream of Muslim mass emotion, which diverted it into several petty streams, some leading to desert lands there to dry up, some flowing the zig-zag routes to meet the original bed in their headlong march and some others rushing towards the mighty flowing ocean to drown themselves. To try to find any consistency, sound reasoning or logical method in Muslim politics during that period would be utterly futile. We were divided between ourselves²⁷

One of the important groups which disappeared temporarily from the all-India scene was that of the *ulama*. The setback to the Khilafat cause shattered all their dreams and brought to an end their influence in all-India politics. Their period of glory, when they dominated all-India conferences and influenced political decisions, was over. Their opposition to Council entry in pursuance of non-cooperation outside the legislature was disregarded, and they were told not to dabble in politics.²⁸ Abdul Bari, who had forged the alliance between the *ulama* and the Congress, became increasingly despondent and isolated, and in August 1923, he complained that 'those who pretended to be

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our friends at one time and made a catspaw of the *ulama* now seem anxious to get rid of them'.²⁹ Abdul Bari was right. The *ulama* were pressed into service during the Khilafat protest because of their influence in the countryside, where the peasants, artisans, and weavers were greatly susceptible to their religious exhortations through the local mosques.³⁰ But in 1923, when the issues confronting Indian politicians were political the services of the *ulama* were no longer required. They were bluntly told to go back to the *maktabs* and *madrasas*.

While the *ulama* were still busy deciding their future course of action, their erstwhile allies among the Muslim professional groups went their separate ways. By December 1923, Ansari and Mohammad Ali gave up their opposition to Council entry and fell in line with Ajmal Khan, Abdul Majid Khwaja, Tasadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani, and Khaliquzzaman. Sherwani and Khaliquzzaman served as Secretaries of the Swaraj Party, founded by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das. In Bengal, Das was able to enlist the support of many leading Khilafatists in his attempt to breach the 'citadel of bureaucracy' both from inside and outside the legislative council. In the Punjab, a dominant group amongst Muslims rallied behind Fazl-i-Husain's³¹ 'Rural Party', which was strengthened by an alliance with the rural Hindus, mainly Jats, of the southern districts of Ambala division.

Another branch of the old Khilafat leadership, including the Ali Brothers, became more closely involved in communal politics. Their attempts to continue the Khilafat agitation had failed, and they suddenly found themselves isolated from the mainstream of national politics. But the deteriorating communal situation in the country enabled them to take up narrow sectarian causes and exploit the religious sentiments of their co-religionists. In consequence, they became estranged from the Congress. They vigorously attacked the Congress leadership for its 'subservience' to the Hindu Mahasabha, criticised Gandhi for his links with overtly Hindu communalists, and for some of his statements on Hindu-Muslim riots and the Hindi-Urdu controversy.³² The Congress, wrote Shaukat Ali, Gandhi's old Khilafat comrade, 'has become an adjunct of the Hindu Mahasabha and will soon be a seeker of favours at the door of the British'.³³ Shaukat Ali, who was prone to trim his ideological sails to meet each new political wind, produced no evidence to support his allegations.³⁴

The Khilafat movement also furnished the Congress with future stalwarts. Men like Ansari, Ajmal Khan, Sherwani, Asaf Ali, Khwaja and Syed Mahmud were identified as Nationalist Muslims as opposed to the anti-Congress lobby led by the Ali Brothers. In the aftermath of the civil disobedience campaign they were not overwhelmed by the communal tide because of their genuine commitment to the ideals of nationalism and adherence to the principles of secularism. Most Nationalist Muslims remained unflinching supporters of the Congress and devoted followers of Gandhi, Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru. Loyalty to these leaders and, particularly to the Congress organisation, was one of the distinctive features of their political creed. Even when they disagreed with the Congress policies and programmes, they did not, unlike many of their contemporaries, switch their loyalties. 'We must not leave the Congress', Ansari

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pleaded with Sherwani at the height of his differences with Gandhi and his opposition to civil disobedience, 'nor must we do anything to weaken the Congress. . . . To leave the Congress would be to commit suicide, to oppose the Congress would be a crime.'³⁵ In a letter to Syed Abdullah Brelvi, Ansari referred to his loyalty and 'deep attachment to the Congress and to those who have got its reins in their hands. . .'.³⁶

Ansari was the unquestioned leader of the Nationalist Muslims. In July 1925 he resigned from the membership of the Khilafat Committee, which he regarded as a communal body, but continued to be actively associated with the Congress, and to the end of his life he devoted himself to the accomplishment of two aims—to find a remedy to the Hindu-Muslim conflicts and to bring his co-religionists closer to the Congress. A manifesto issued in 1920 by Ansari, along with Srinivasa Sastri, Motilal Nehru, Ajmal Khan, Sarojini Naidu and the Raja of Mahmudabad served as the basis of his activities. The manifesto attributed the Hindu-Muslim problem to the indiscriminate mixing of religious and political issues and saw the remedy in the creation of 'national consciousness' and 'national atmosphere' in order to eliminate communal differences and tensions.³⁷

This was not all. Ansari was also associated with Lajpat Rai in preparing a National Pact for improving Hindu-Muslim relations.³⁸ The draft of the Pact, made public in January 1924, attempted to deal with the religious and political aspects of the communal pro-

blem and offered a solution.³⁹ Although the attempt failed, it did not deter Ansari from continuing his efforts to cement Hindu-Muslim unity. He pleaded for voluntary effort on both sides to restore communal friendliness. This was because of his conviction that communal unity was an essential preliminary for a struggle for independence. For this reason, he opposed Gandhi's decision to launch civil disobedience in 1930. In his view the country was not ready for civil disobedience because, apart from other factors, Hindu-Muslim unity had reached its lowest watermark.⁴⁰ But Gandhi disagreed. He felt that the Hindu-Muslim problem had to be 'approached in a different manner from the one we have hitherto adopted'. He believed that political adjustment was only possible if there was trust between the two communities and the Congress could only command such trust 'by becoming fearless and strictly just. But meanwhile the third party—the evil British power—has got to be sterilised. There will be no charter of independence before the Hindus and the Muslims have met but there can be virtual independence before the charter is received'.⁴¹

The Nationalist Muslims were distressed by Gandhi's cold and calculating reply and his 'indifference to the feelings of those who stood by him in his movement just like soldiers'.⁴² They noted with disappointment and acute anxiety that, from 1925 onwards, the Mahatma made no serious attempt to break down the communal impasse because of his preoccupation with the removal of untouchability and the *khadi* campaign.⁴³ In 1926 he held aloof from the debate on the political resolution at Kanpur, deciding to remain at his Wardha Ashram for a year. He also took no part in the Nehru Committee meetings, nor was he present at the All-Parties Conference held in Lucknow in September 1928. In consequence, Ansari complained that Gandhi and Motilal Nehru were 'not so eager, anxious

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and striving for Hindu-Muslim unity as is necessary considering the importance of the problem'.⁴⁴

Ansari and his friends failed to perceive the complex socio-economic factors which produced Hindu-Muslim tension and oversimplified the causes of communal unrest. The accomplishment of Hindu-Muslim unity was a rush job from first to last. Once Ansari took upon himself the responsibility of promoting the cause of communal harmony, he pressed it relentlessly with the zeal of a missionary. But he exaggerated the ease with which it could be accomplished, ignoring the intense struggle for power, influence and patronage resulting from the operation of the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, and taking no account of the role of the British in creating and fostering Hindu-Muslim differences. Ansari assumed, somewhat naively, that unity conferences and political negotiations with Jinnah and the Mohammad Ali group were necessary for settling the Hindu-Muslim question. When these failed, he complained that Gandhi and Motilal Nehru had not shown sufficient interest in the solution of the communal problem. He failed to realize that, after 1928, it was superfluous for the leaders of various communities to demonstrate their own concord; communalism had struck deeper roots in society.

III

Next to his efforts to promote Hindu-Muslim unity, Ansari was eager to draw the Muslim into the national movement and to dispel their fears of Hindu domination. He realized the need to do so because of the recrudescence of widespread communal violence, the revival of the militant *shuddhi*, *sangathan*, *tabligh* and *tanzim* movements, and the intense struggle for the scarce loaves and fishes between the competing Hindu and Muslim elites. This contributed to the growth of communal awareness, sharpened existing cleavages and encouraged communal alignments.⁴⁵ The publication of the Nehru Report in August 1928 was the last straw. It alienated many influential Muslims from the Congress and provided them with an excellent excuse to adopt an aggressive communal policy. The intransigent organisers of the All-Parties Muslim Conference, many of whom had been in the forefront of the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements, spurned the Congress overtures for reconciliation and appealed to their over-

lords in London and Delhi to save them from the cheerless prospect of Hindu domination. For instance, Mohammad Ali launched a virulent attack on Gandhi and the Congress.⁴⁶ At the All-Parties Conference in April 1930, he said :

We refuse to join Gandhi because his movement [civil disobedience] is not a movement for complete independence of India but for making seventy millions of Indian Mussalman dependent on the Hindu Mahasabha.⁴⁷

This was strong language, but his view of Gandhi and the Congress was shared by many Muslims.

Ansari, however, pinned his faith on the Congress Party, remained loyal to its leaders, and worked whole-heartedly for the success of the Congress programme, an essential ingredient of which was Hindu-Muslim unity. After the failure of the All-Parties Convention in December 1928, he concentrated his efforts towards the creation of a body to act as an intermediary between the Congress and Muslims, to heal the communal breach, and to wean away the Muslims from the 'influence of communalists and reactionary leaders'. With this aim in mind, he founded the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party in July 1929.⁴⁸ The main organisers of the party were Abdul Maiid

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Khwaja, Abul Kalam Azad,⁴⁹ Tasadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani, Choudhry Khaliquzzaman,⁵⁰ Rafi Ahmad Kidwai, Syed Mahmud, Asaf Ali, Syed Abdullah Brelvi, and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, an influential Congress leader from the North-West Frontier Province.⁵¹

But the going was tough for Ansari and his colleagues in the Nationalist Muslim Party. The Ali Brothers condemned them for 'betraying' the 'Muslim cause'. 'In your blind adherence to Motilal Nehru', Shaukat Ali wrote to Ansari, 'you betrayed Muslims and your friends and co-workers'.⁵² The Hindu Mahasabha leaders, who had gained much influence after 1922, also suspected their intentions. B. S. Moonje, the militant and overtly anti-Muslim leader from Nagpur, saw in the formation of the Nationalist Muslim Party an attempt to 'enter the Muslims in the Congress in large numbers so that they may... exercise pressure from inside the Congress'.⁵³ In

such circumstances, the Nationalist Muslims were caught in cross currents of hostility between those they wished to unite.

The fears expressed by Moonje and shared by many other Hindus were unfounded, for the Nationalist Muslims did not command any considerable support.⁵⁴ Their party was composed of a small number of professional men—lawyers, doctors, and journalists—who did not operate in politics from a position they could claim their own. They mainly depended on the support of leading Congressmen who encouraged them to counter the activities of anti-Congress Muslims and patronised them in order to give credence to their claims of representing all Indians. As a result, the Nationalist Muslims exercised hardly any influence and remained on the fringes of Indian politics.

The Nationalist Muslims suffered from yet another drawback. Somehow their image got indissolubly linked with that of the Hindus, owing to which they could hardly command any effective hearing from their own community. This was particularly true in the mid-twenties when communal violence was rampant and mutual distrust between the Hindus and Muslims widespread. In the midst of all this, the communalist Muslims gained the confidence of their co-religionists, while the efforts of the Nationalist Muslims to restore communal harmony by organising meetings and entering into pacts and agreements failed. In the words of Khaliquzzaman, who himself signed the death warrant of the Nationalist Muslim Party in the early 1930s, the party failed to achieve its desired objective because:

By its very nature it could have no roots in Muslim society and it did not make much headway either. Under its name no doubt several conferences were held. . .but it had no rules or regulations; no separate membership and no separate office. . . . Being backed by the Hindu Sabha press it lived in the newspapers all right but beyond that it had no positive existence. My idea that it might bring about some discipline in Nationalist Muslim ranks did not materialise because the remedy was not potent enough to eradicate the evil.⁵⁵

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By 1934, the Nationalist Muslims stood 'divested of every shred of principle or practice on the basis of which they formed their group, and which they had proudly nailed to their masthead—of everything, all, except their name'.⁵⁶

Ansari was bitterly disappointed with the limited success of his efforts. The Nationalist Muslim Party soon became a defunct body and his efforts to resolve the communal crisis came to nothing. Early in 1933, Ansari temporarily retired from politics when he went to Europe partly for reasons of health, but mainly because he was unable to cope with the political developments in India. On his return, he and a few other Congress leaders revived the old Swaraj Party.⁵⁷ They issued a statement, which met with immediate response, and the All-India Congress Committee decided to contest the elections to the Legislative Assembly and set up a Parliamentary Board, nominating Ansari as its President. Ansari threw himself into the work with great zeal and devotion. But the growing strains of a hectic public life had a telling effect on his health. So in April 1935, he retired from active politics and devoted his time to the affairs of the Jamia Millia which he helped to found and of which at his death on 10 May 1936, he was the Chancellor. He was buried in the proximity to the Jamia buildings.

IV

Ansari occupies an important place in the annals of modern Indian public life. He was a major figure in Indian politics for over twenty years. He was, as we have seen, much involved in the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements, and distinguished himself by his sober and moderate advocacy of the Khilafat cause. In the Congress organisation he held several important positions. He founded the Delhi Congress Committee and from 1919 to 1926, with the exception of

two years, was its Secretary. In December 1927, he presided over the All-India Congress session held in Madras, where he had first in 1898 attended the Congress as a student.

Although passionately devoted to the cause of Indian nationalism, Ansari foresaw and understood more than any of his Congress colleagues the disastrous consequences of Hindu-Muslim tension. He was convinced that the Hindu-Muslim problem was still at a stage when it could be solved and he, accordingly, directed all his efforts and energy to find a solution. Sarojini Naidu called Jinnah the 'Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity'. But in reality, it was Ansari who deserved this title. The supreme end of his life was to unite the two great communities. He worked for this cause with extraordinary persistence and tenacity.

Ansari enjoyed a fine reputation among his contemporaries though some modern writers have failed to take note of this fact.⁵⁸ He had a very attractive personality which was free from rancour and bitterness, and untouched by any personal or political scandal—a virtue lacking in many political leaders, both in Ansari's times and in our own. His friends and colleagues admired his generous hospitality, his sincerity, and his unassailable loyalty to the Congress. In the words of Tej Bahadur Sapru, who met Ansari first in 1915:

...There was scarcely any man in the public life of the country for whom I had greater respect and for whom personally, if I may say so, greater affection. In these days, when it is a fashion for so many to claim to be nationalists, there was no man among the Hindus or the Muslims to whose real feelings of nationalism I felt more drawn than those of Ansari. Whatever else he may or may not have been, he was, in my humble opinion, a very true, a very selfless, and a very earnest nationalist. . . . We have lost in him not only a great patriot, a great nationalist, a great doctor, but what is more, a great gentleman.⁵⁹

This was an apt and deserved tribute to the memory of Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari.

1. To Mohammad Ali*

Delhi
28.11.1912

My dear Mohammad,¹

Enclosed I am sending you a copy of a letter from Naziruddin Hasan.² I am not at all surprised at the views expressed by the authorities about the Mission.³ But it is a question one must think about and be prepared to fight against. Another matter to consider is whether it is the opinion of the local government of U.P. or whether it is the general policy of the government of India.

So far the government of India have not in any way shown any dislike for our human mission, nor should I think they are likely to do so. My own impression has been that they have been very fair to us and have given us every legitimate help and support. However, one never knows what may be in their mind. After reading this letter and copy of the telegram I sent to the Punjab Government yesterday on the advice of the Chief Commissioner of Delhi, I would

**Mohammad Ali Papers*, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

¹Mohammad Ali (1878-1931); educated at the M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and Lincoln College, Oxford, from 1898 to 1902, where he got a second in Modern History, 'missing a first, as I learnt subsequently from my tutor, by a very narrow margin'. On his return to India, Mohammad Ali joined the Rampur Education Department and later entered the Baroda Service, 1904-12. On 11 January 1911, he launched the *Comrade*, which was hailed as the 'new star in the firmament of Indian journalism'. From 1912 to May 1915, he was active in the Kanpur mosque agitation, the Aligarh Muslim University and the pan-Islamic movements; interned with his elder brother, Shaukat Ali, May 1915 to December 1919; led a Khilafat delegation to Europe, January-September 1920; imprisoned for 'sedition', 1921-23; president, Indian National Congress, 1923; estranged from Congress after 1924 and joined the campaign against the Nehru Committee Report, 1928; urged Muslims to remain aloof from the civil disobedience movement, 1930; attended the Round Table Conference, 1930-31.

²Educated in Aligarh and Trinity College, Dublin; active in the Home Rule movement; one of the founder members of the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba* (Association of the Servants of Kaaba); one of the twelve members appointed by the All-India Muslim League to consider the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, 1918; around 1918 he entered the Hyderabad service, eventually rising to become Chief Justice and to bear the title Nawab Nazir Yar Jung.

³In 1912, M.A. Ansari led an Indian Medical Mission to Constantinople during the Balkan Wars. The mission returned to India about the middle of 1913 and its services were greatly appreciated in Turkey.

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like your advice whether anything further is necessary to guard against our being in any way stopped from going to Turkey at the last moment. I for one do not detect specially in the actions of Mr. Hailey⁴ any such desire to thwart us. On the other hand, in order to hasten matters he advised the despatch of a telegram to the government of Punjab. I am still awaiting their reply from Lahore.

I have got altogether twenty members now at Delhi and the number in my opinion won't exceed more than twenty-five. Rs. 15,000 have been offered from Hyderabad, Deccan.

Yours sincerely,
Mukhtar

⁴Malcolm Hailey (b. 1872); entered Indian Civil Service, 1895; chief Commissioner of Delhi, 1912-18; member, Viceroy's Council, 1919-24; governor of Punjab, 1924-28; governor of U.P., 1928-30.

2. From Naziruddin Hasan

Lucknow
26.11.1912

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Yesterday I went to see Sir James Meston¹, the Lieutenant-Governor of these Provinces. The part of his conversation with me in connection with your medical mission will be of some interest to you. He told me that it was no good helping any mission going out from India now. It would be too late. Turks require immediate help. The people here are not practical. If they had thought of sending or organising a mission they ought to have done so before. These men are not going. It is no use sending money to Mohammad Ali or Ansari—nothing will come out of the scheme. I will tell all this to my friend, Mohammad Ali, whom I am going to see.

¹James Scorgie Meston (1865-1943); educated at Aberdeen Grammar School, Aberdeen University; Balliol College, Oxford; entered ICS, 1885; assistant magistrate and collector of Saharanpur, Basti, Moradabad, Partabgarh. 1885-9; served as assistant commissioner and as settlement officer before becoming third secretary to UP government, 1899-1903; secretary to the government of India finance department, 1906-12; lieutenant-governor of the UP, 1912-18.

Maulvi Abdul Bari² of Firangi Mahal had a talk with Commissioner of Lucknow, Lovett,³ in course of which he remarked "no mission will be allowed to go—the certified doctors may be allowed to go but nobody else will be allowed to accompany them".

In view of the above remarks of the two high officials of the provinces, I would ask you to ascertain fully if there exists any plan of stopping your splendid mission at Bombay. I hope you would go and you are going. If our mission fails we will be made a laughing stock of all the English Clubgoers in India.

Yours sincerely,
Naziruddin Hasan

²1878-1926; *alim* from Firangi Mahal, the famous seminary in Lucknow; founded the *Madrasa-i-Nizamia* at Firangi Mahal; one of the founders of the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba*; took a leading part in the Kanpur mosque agitation, and the Khilafat movement; president, Jamiat-ul-ulama-i-Hind, December 1919; *pir* of the Ali Brothers, M.M. Chotani, Rani of Jehangirabad, and wife and sister of Abdul Majid Khwaja.

³Harnington Verney Lovett (1864-1945); entered ICS, 1884; awarded *Kaiser-i-Hind* Gold Medal for anti-plague services; commissioner of Lucknow; Reader in Indian History, Oxford University, 1920-32; author of a well known book on the Indian National Movement.

3. To Mohammad Ali*

Delhi
9.10.1913

My dear old Mohammad,

I am sure you are well posted regarding all that is happening here in India. The gods are now showing mercy towards the mortals; there is a talk of a compromise in the air. The attempt on the first of October to cause cleavage in the community failed miserably; better counsels prevailed and a representative meeting is to be held to appoint a deputation. Different dates are discussed but an earlier date is likely. *Bhaiya* is evidently influencing the gods to try and

**Mohammad Ali Papers*, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

undo all that has been done by the little tin-gods. It remains to be seen what takes place.

Dr. Abdul Majid came to see me today; he is on a visit to India for what purpose I don't know. He has just returned from Simla and told me he learnt there that you and Wazir Hasan¹ have fallen out. I do hope this is false, as it would be downright shame if a split took place between you two. Meetings in your support have taken place in almost every town in India.

Your uncle is quite well now and is doing his usual work. You will have to give me some *mithain* for that.

Your wife is still at Indore. Moazzam² is here for a few days. I can write such a lot but must stop and catch the mail.

Do write a few lines. Love.

Yours affectionately,
Mukhtar

¹1874-1947; educated at Aligarh and Muir Central College, Allahabad; began legal practice in Jaunpur, moving later to Partabgarh and then to Lucknow; one of the founders of the All-India Muslim League, 1906; assistant secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, 1919; dominated Muslim League politics, 1913-16, when he played an important role in Congress-League rapprochement; member, UP Legislative Council, 1916-19; resigned from the Muslim League in 1919; appointed Judicial Commissioner in 1921; one of the Puisne Judges of the Chief Court after its inauguration in 1925; received knighthood in 1931.

²Moazzam Ali belonged to Rampur and was related to the Ali Brothers. He was much involved in the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movements and gave up his legal practice in 1920. He succeeded Shaukat Ali as secretary of the Central Khilafat Committee in 1921, and was a member of the Khilafat Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee in 1922. In 1922-23, he was a secretary of the Congress, and a member of its Working Committee in 1923.

4. To Secretary, Government of India, Foreign and Political Department*

28.2.1914

On the 1st of February 1914, His Excellency the Ottoman Consul-General handed to me second class of the Osmanieh Order, graciously

*Home Political (Deposit), July 1914, 17, National Archives of India.

conferred on me by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan of Turkey, in recognition of the services rendered by the All-India Medical Mission which had proceeded to Turkey during the recent Balkan War and of which I had the honour to be the Director.

From the very inception, the mission received considerable assistance from His Excellency the Viceroy. The work of obtaining passports was specially facilitated. We also received much help from British authorities on our journey in Egypt through favour of His Excellency, although the war was in progress. During our sojourn in Turkey also we received on the recommendation of His Excellency every attention from the British Ambassador and the Embassy and Consular officials. On occasions when no shipping company would undertake to accept goods for being shipped to Turkey, His Excellency the Viceroy was gracious enough to forward some parcels for the mission as government parcels. His Excellency had been graciously pleased to bid God speed to the mission at the time of its departure and on its return to India, evinced his continued interest in, and appreciation of, the work of the Mission by sending a telegraphic message of welcome to us in Bombay. I beg to request that His Excellency the Viceroy will be pleased to permit me to wear on ceremonial occasions the decoration conferred on me by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan of Turkey. I trust that His Excellency would thus add yet one more to our obligation to him.¹

¹Ansari was asked to secure a formal notification from the Turkish Government about the decorations conferred on him.

5. To A.R. Bijnori¹

Delhi
27.3.1917

Dearest Bijnori,

I am in receipt of your letter and copy of your resignation. I am

¹Abdur Rahman Bijnori (d. 1918) was a distinguished student of M.A.O. College, Aligarh. He was in the forefront of the 1907 College strike and was expelled along with others. He conceived the Sultania College scheme which did not come through.

sure you meant the letter to be read by Shuaib³ and Sindhi³. We have all read it and discussed it, and you may consider this letter to be the expression of our conjoint opinions.

I am afraid that your resignation is *ultra vires*, and does not affect your position towards the Muslim University question in any way.⁴ The Regulation Committee has not yet come into existence as the government has not accepted the resolution passed at Lucknow.

Now about your attitude towards the pending question I feel that you have every right to express at the meeting of the Foundation Committee what you honestly believe to be right. I would even say that it would be unjust to yourself and unfair to the Muslim public if you did not express what you sincerely believe; and without trying to flatter you, it is due to you to express our opinion that your decision on this question would be very weighty and would be considered as such by the people present in the meeting. But before you definitely decide your attitude I wish to lay before you all the facts that have to be considered before doing so.

The Education Member⁵, as you have learnt from Sindhi's letter, advises acceptance, of course not officially, to try to accede to all our demands during the Committee stage of the bill. How far he will succeed he does not know. But there can be no doubt as regards his *bona fides*. The future Education Member may not be so sympathetic or so strong to carry out the necessary

³Shuaib Qureshi belonged to Rae Bareilly and was educated in Aligarh. While still in college, he took part in the Red Crescent Mission, 1912-13, and was assistant secretary of the Aligarh Old Boys' association under Shaukat Ali; worked for the Sultania College scheme in Bhopal, 1916; editor of the English daily, *New Era*, 1917; active during the Khilafat movement with his father-in-law, Mohammad Ali; general secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, 1924-25; member of the Nehru Committee, 1928; migrated to Pakistan in 1947 and served for a short while as High Commissioner for Pakistan in India.

⁴Abdur Rahman Siddiqi was a close friend of Mohammad Ali and Ansari and was much involved with the agitation for the release of Mohammad Ali, 1917-18; went to England in 1919 with Shuaib Qureshi and remained there during the 1920s and 1930s, becoming a successful businessman; later became governor of East Pakistan.

⁵The idea of developing the College into a University was mooted time and again from several platforms. For details, see M. Rahman, *From Consultation to Confrontation: A study of the Muslim League in British Indian Politics 1906-1912* (London, 1970), pp. 175-6.

⁶Harcourt Butler, the Education Member, was a supporter of the Muslim University scheme. He believed that the government should encourage denominational Universities, which would provide religious instruction and inevitably tend to keep 'alive the Hindu-Muslim feelings'.

alterations in the bill. When asked whether any alterations regarding the powers of the Court, Council, Senate and Syndicate could be discussed he said that discussions not only on those matters, but about anything, not excluding the powers of the government could be brought in the Committee stage. Now this seems as much as we have any right to expect from any Education Member.

The second question is that of the Party of "Ahrar". The Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad⁶ and Jinnah⁷ demand one-sided agreement of the entire party *viz.*, acceptance of the University without opposition as the only solution to prevent disruption and disaster. My own attitude is that acceptance of the University with an opposition and division on the question would give the real feeling of the Muslims and would strengthen the hands of those members of the Council who would press for amendments in the bill during the Committee stage. And there is just a remote chance even after the Committee stage of rejecting it, should the bill be found unsatisfactory. The opposition should not carry any bitterness nor antagonism beyond the meeting of the Foundation Committee. When once the resolution is passed we should*all strive to the best of our ability to make the best of a bad bargain.

But as all are aware of the uncertainty of the public mind on such occasions and there is a chance of University being rejected, specially when backed by such popular exponents as yourself and Khwaja.

⁶Mohammad Ali Mohammad, Raja of Mahmudabad (1879-1931); descendant of Qazi Nasrullah, a Siddiqi Sheikh of Baghdad, who came to India in the thirteenth century; Mahmudabad's ancestors settled at Mahmudabad in the sixteenth century and greatly increased their estates in the eighteenth century; member, UP Legislative Council, 1904-9; governor-general's Council, 1907-20; played a leading role in the Kanpur mosque agitation and the Muslim University movement; supported the Home Rule agitation 'with a clique of noisy and aggressive Muslims of the young party, who make the Raja's house their headquarters and live and agitate at their expense'; president, All-India Muslim League, 1915-19; home member, UP government, 1920-25; president, British Indian Association, 1917-21, 1930-31; vice-chancellor, Aligarh Muslim University 1920-3; encouraged the boycott of Simon Commission in Lucknow, 1927, supported the Nehru Report, 1928; president, All-India Muslim League, 1928.

⁷Mohammad Ali Jinnah (1879-1948); educated in India and Lincoln Inn, England; called to the Bar, 1896; enrolled Advocate, Bombay High Court, 1897; played a leading part in promoting rapprochement between the Muslim League and Congress, 1915-17; president All-India Muslim League, 1916, 1920 and 1935-48; member, Indian Central Legislative Assembly and leader of the Muslim League Party until August 1947; governor-general of Pakistan from August 1947 till his death.

I despair to think what would happen when such a contingency occurs.

One naturally is led to think whether there was any possible means of ensuring the acceptance of the University with an opposition without rejection. To my mind this can only be done if all the leaders were to come to compromise on this matter, although I must admit that the position of the opposition becomes a bit false after such a compromise. But these things have happened before and do happen daily in practical politics without straining the conscience of the parties concerned.

There is another view also specially as the question is so vital and so far-reaching that the acceptance of the University would only be fruitful when it is effected by the entire concurrence and approval of the whole community, and the opposing parties.

Then, there is the Chhindwara resolution which has already been sent to the Secretary of the Foundation Committee to the effect that this matter be postponed until after the war is over. Although it would be said by many that this is simply a matter of tactics, and not the real intention of those supporting the resolution, I maintain that this point of view is well worth consideration, and I am not sure that this may not be the only possible solution of all the opposing points of view.

Lastly, Prince Hamidullah Khan⁸, during my last visit to Bhopal was contemplating the location of the Sultania College at Aligarh with a view to affiliate it to the Muslim University. This presupposes the acceptance of the University and also the fact that the future Sultania College would be able to obtain better treatment at the hands of the Muslim University than those of Allahabad. I am anxious to know if any decision has been made on this matter.

Yours most affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

⁸B. 1894; third son of the Begum of Bhopal and heir to the throne; supported the Sultania College scheme; succeeded in 1926.

6. To A. M. Khwaja*

Simla
3.9.1917

My dear Khwaja,¹

I am sending you the enclosed telegram sent to the office bearers of the Provincial Muslim Leagues in India, and also the letter addressed to the Secretary of the Central League, Lucknow, copies of which have been sent to the Press for publication. It is absolutely necessary that the matter should be immediately taken in hand and Mr. Mohammad Ali elected as President of the next annual session of the League, as the 8th September is the last date when the name of the President-elect should reach Lucknow. It is moreover imperative to hold public meetings where popular voice should with all force and unanimity declare him to be the only person fit for this honour. I absolutely rely on you to make every effort to carry on this work to a successful finish. As Mohammad Ali's name has been mentioned, he *must* be elected to the Presidential chair, as it would be very disgraceful if some one else was allowed to supersede him.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

*Courtesy : Professor Jamal Khwaja of the Department of Philosophy, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.

¹Abdul Majid Khwaja (1885-1962); educated at M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and Christ College, Cambridge; on his return to India set up legal practice first at Aligarh and then at Patna; elected trustee of Aligarh, 1912; succeeded Shaukat Ali as secretary of the Aligarh Old Boys' Association, 1915; organised the Home Rule League at Aligarh; gave up his practice during the Non-cooperation movement, 1920-21; principal, Jamia Millia, 1922; secretary, Congress Working Committee, 1923; chairman, Aligarh Municipal Board, 1923; member of the Muslim Nationalist Party founded by Ansari.

**7. To Hony. Secretary,
The All-India Muslim League,
Lucknow**

Simla
3.9.1917

Dear Sir,

We have read your letter in the *Leader* of September 1st inviting members of the All-India Muslim League to suggest the name of the

President of the All-India Muslim League for the next annual session.

The only man that suggests itself to our mind is that of the great Muslim leader, Mr Mohammad Ali, who has been to our great sorrow interned at Chhindwara by the unjust orders of an unsympathetic government. There is no one man who can better represent the choice of our people and the spirit of the Muslim democracy and speak with the authority of a true national leader than Mr. Mohammad Ali. His noble services rendered at the most psychological moment in the history of the country and the life of the community to which he belongs, mark him out as one of the greatest and most potent factor in the formation of the Indian nation.

The internment of Mohammad Ali, at a time when his services were most needed by his people, constituted a wrong against which the Muslims have been raising their voice again and again; but now when the advent of the Indian renaissance is near his forced absence from the deliberations of the Congress and the Muslim League becomes a great national loss and it is high time that we made strong and effective protest against the unjust policy of the government, by electing our interned leader as the President of the Muslim League.

We therefore propose that Mohammad Ali should be unanimously elected to the Presidential chair of the next session of the All-India Muslim League.

Yours truly,
Mazharul Haque¹
M.A. Ansari
(Members of the Muslim
League Council)

¹1866-1930; educated in Patna and in England; called to the Bar, 1891; attended the Muslim Convention at Dacca in 1906 and was one of the founders of the Muslim League; president, All-India Muslim League, Bombay, 1915; was instrumental in bringing about accord between Congress and the League at Lucknow in December 1916; supported Gandhi in Champaran, 1917; became a non-cooperator on Gandhi's call in 1920; retired from active politics after 1922.

8. To A.M. Khwaja*

Delhi
30.11.1918

My dear Khwaja,

The death of Dr. Abdur Rahman Bijnori has created a gap in the Muslim society which it will be very difficult to fill. He was not only a good and true friend but a great scholar and a greater servant of the people. His demise is a great loss to the Muslims who could ill-afford to lose such a noble soul at the present juncture. I would not be far wrong to state that his cruel removal from amongst us in the prime of his manhood, when he had just begun to benefit his people in numerous ways, is a heart rendering calamity.

You are fully aware of the great services he has rendered to the cause of our mother tongue. He actually died serving it. The *Anjuman Taragqi-e-Urdu* proposed to publish an edition-de-deluxe of the *Diwan* of Ghalib, and the late Dr. Abdur Rahman Bijnori had been selected to do the work.¹ He had written a very learned introduction to the *Diwan* and at the time of his death was actually engaged in preparing for its publication. His numerous admirers and friends desire to perpetuate the memory of this silent worker and great scholar by erecting a suitable memorial.

Throughout India there is not a single Urdu Library where scholars could carry on research work and further the cause of our mother tongue. This want has been keenly felt for a long time, and having regard to the great love that our dear departed friend had for Urdu as well as to the fact that Urdu language and literature will be one of the subjects taught in the Muslim University at Aligarh, it is intended that the proposed memorial in memory of our departed friend should take the form of an Urdu Library at Aligarh.

The cost of the project has been roughly estimated at Rs. 20,000 out of which Rs. 10,000 should be spent on the building and the remainder on books and the upkeep of the institution.

My idea is that this whole amount should be collected by private subscriptions and no appeal should be made to the public at large. I feel confident that friends and admirers of the late Doctor, like

*Courtesy : Professor Jamal Khwaja.

¹The *Rig Veda* and the *Diwan-i-Ghalib* were, according to Abdur Rahman, the two 'revealed' books of India.

yourself, can collect this amount in no time, and without any very great effort we should succeed in doing this last service to our beloved friend within a few months.

I have put you down at a minimum for Rs.100 and expect you to exert your influence and collect from other friends as well and send me the amount as soon as possible. Hope you will not disappoint me. Expecting a very early reply, and remittance.

Yours very sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

9. From M.R. Chotani¹

Bombay
9.6.1923

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I had to telegraph to you about the dues for the *Muslim Standard* quite unreservedly.

It is really iniquitous to find at this lapse of time the Central Khilafat Committee raising a dispute as to the legality of the transaction. You know the facts of the case. Bonners had clear open orders to print this paper and they are kept out of their money. The worst part of it is, as my name is the authority in this transaction they are at me, and I expect that if by Thursday this money is not received by Bonners, Abdur Rahman Siddiqi and my office have to face the music. You can realize what it would all mean. It would simply be declaring my firm in England, which I have built at the cost of a few thousand pounds, bankrupt—and through no short-comings of mine.

I do hope you will be kind enough to stir the present offices of the Central Khilafat Committee to act with promptness in this and send the money to London by cable.

Trusting you are well.

Yours sincerely,
Chotani

¹He was a rich merchant of Bombay and made his fortune during the First World War. He was President of the Khilafat Committee founded in Bombay in March 1919, and financed the Khilafat movement both in India and in England. But he abused his position as President of the Central Khilafat Committee by investing sixteen lakhs of its funds in his own financial ventures.

10. From Abdur Rahman Siddiqi

Delhi
1.7.1925

My dear Mukhtar,

Don't get annoyed at my silence. I have tried to give my reasons—good or bad—in my last letter which I wrote to you about a fortnight ago. I could not naturally expect it to be received by you when you wrote to . . . complaining of conduct. But he had written to you before he heard from you, although a few days previously you received his and my letters addressed to Paris. Ghalib told me this morning that a telegram from Hakim Saheb received this morning gives a changed address as he intends to shift from Lausanne on 7th July. I presume, you are travelling together. Hence I am sending this to Constantinople.

Before I begin this letter, I must send you and Hakim Saheb my loving greetings for the *Idd* which is to come on tomorrow. This means that the *Hajj* will have been performed today and I hope that the Indians who started rather late will have reached Mecca yesterday. I do miss you most on *Idd* and long to see you back home hale and hearty.

Well, Das¹ passed away. As directed by Mahatmaji, there was a procession this morning and a meeting this evening. The procession and the meeting came on in Delhi but the attendance was poor. We are passing through bad times in Delhi although not so bad as they were during the last *Idd*. The government did not forbid Pahari Dhiraj route and the Hindus began to clamour. They approached the government but got a blank refusal. This matter, which is of really no importance, has been made an all India question like all other questions

¹Chitta Ranjan Das (1870-1925); son of a reputed solicitor of the Calcutta High Court pursued the same profession after his return to India in 1894; first came into prominence as counsel for defence in the trial of Aurobindo Ghose; joined the Congress as a delegate in 1906; came to the forefront of national politics in 1917 when he was invited to preside over the Bengal Provincial Conference; allied with Gandhi at the Nagour Congress, December 1920, and became leader of non-cooperation in Bengal; president, Indian National Congress, 1922; organised the Swaraj Party with Motilal Nehru, and succeeded in having his policy of Council entry accepted by the Congress; elected to the Bengal Legislative Council, 1923; mayor, Calcutta Corporation, 1924-5; chief architect of the 'Bengal Pact' with some Muslim councillors in Bengal.

raised by our Hindu friends. When they did not get any help from the official quarter, they thought of holding a Municipal meeting of some of the selected members and discussed the situation. The Muslims suggested that they could not make a request at this stage, unless they were requested by the Hindus to make an attempt in their names. They wanted time to consider and in the next meeting, it was declared by them that they were willing to appeal to the Muslim community to forego this route. The appeal was published in the *Tej* and *Hindustan Times*. The Muslim leaders then started to invite several other citizens but no agreement could be arrived at as some of them, mainly my uncle, Haji Abdul Ghaffar, Nawab Nain Mirza and Haji Fazlur Rahman, would not agree to forego the route. It was decided ultimately to get a meeting of the *Anjuman-i-Islamia* convened. This was done but the people of the city—specially of the locality (Bara Hindu Rao)—in spite of our best efforts decided to refuse the appeal and suggested that it would be better to ask the government to allow cows to be butchered in the individual houses. This settled or rather unsettled the Hindus and the government seeing that no compromise was possible arrested Mohan Singh, six other Hindus and five Muslims the next day. The result was that the Hindus of Pahari Dhiraj and a portion of Khari Baoli merchants closed their shops shortly after. But the hartal became more general since yesterday and all the Hindu shops in the city were closed. We convened another Municipal meeting today and placed a new proposal to have a slaughter house near Bara Hindu Rao. This would render the Pahari Dhiraj route useless unless some of the Muslims wanted to take the cow out of spite and assured Hindus that we would do our best in persuading people not to use the route. But as the government position was that the route would open and be allowed peaceably if it were attempted to be used and the matter was really for the parties to compromise and some of the Muslims members were of contrary opinion, the Hindus also voted against the sanction of a new slaughter house or even a temporary one for three days. The result is that the shops are closed and the government has military and sufficient police force and the machine guns are allowed to patrol once or twice through the city. Dr. Bharuch has been here for the last few days. Shaukat, who was going on his tour, decided to stay here for *Idd*—but the position could not be improved.

As for Mr. Das's sudden death—it has really taken the best man after Mahatmaji. It seems that the Indian star will remain on the decline for a long time to come and God has not ordained it otherwise.

Bhabhi Jazn has got the car and I understand from Khan Saheb, she was satisfied.

Begum is down with malaria and so is Jamila. Jamila is better today but she would not take quinine in spite of my best efforts. She is being treated by Hakim Zafar Ahmad. If you were here it would have been so very different and I don't know how to persuade her to do otherwise. Fazal is quite well.

Delhi has not been so warm this year as it was in the last. It has been raining off and on throughout.

Shaukat and Mohammad Ali came just now and wanted to take me to Sadr but I have told them that I could not go as I was sick of the whole situation and according to me the Hindus are to blame themselves for their very unreasonable attitude.

No news of Farid yet. When is he returning ?

I have not taken my dinner and it is about 10 P.M. and hence I leave to rush home. With best love.

Yours very affectionately,
Abdur Rahman

²Faridul Haq Ansari (b. 1895); secretary, Delhi Provincial Congress Committee 1929-30; founder member, Congress Socialist Party 1934; member, National Executive of Socialist Party 1948-59; elected to the Rajya Sabha 1955.

11. From Abdur Rahman Siddiqi

London
1.8.1925

My dear Dr. Saheb,

Your disappearance from Venice and no news since then is tantalising. Evidently Stambul was more attractive than I had anticipated and you got no time to write. I am looking forward most anxiously to a long and full letter telling me all that you have done and seen. A letter from Paris yesterday told me that you had spoken to some merchants there also, and I have been asked to visit Paris to arrange the export of jute bags to Turkey, etc. I am going there for the week. This Paris letter has come from Rashid Saad Bey.

Dr. Wahby has arranged for Shaukat¹ with some teacher of Lycee Lakanal and is already with him. They are at Les Glycines, Vieux-Moulin (Oise) near Compiègne (in the forest of that name) and from there they will be going to the seaside. This news was sent by the Doctor and not by Shaukat. In spite of my repeated admonitions, the boy has not written a line and what is worse is that he behaved very shabbily towards Iftikhar² also. Probably he has written to you in full.

The news about Basit³ is rather sad. The poor boy has failed. This did not affect him much but what did upset his equilibrium of mind was the cross list. Out of five subjects they have failed him in four and this has crushed poor Basit. I myself cannot understand this. Basit failing in English composition seems to be unthinkable. If he has not got to attend lectures next year, the idea is to go to Germany and stay there till April next. That will improve his health and perhaps give him the practical training he cannot get here. It is reported that Ahmad⁴ has passed his B.A. at Oxford in the third class. He too has not had the decency to give me the news. I expected him to get a first. I know nothing about where he is and what is his immediate programme.

Farid is coming over to live with me from Tuesday next, that is the 3rd instant. We are also arranging for coaching by a good man called Sparking. It will cost about £ 6-6-0.

Owing to lack of money I have not started the medicine yet. My correspondence with Shuaib has taken a more affectionate and sensible turn and he too has calmed down. So your work as the peace-maker is robbed of much of its importance. Still I want you to go and tell him all and arrange something for the poor boy who is much disturbed over his present penniless predicament.

Our work shows signs of brightening up a bit although the strike in Belgium is still on.

Not a word from Hakim Saheb since I saw him off at Marseilles.

Do write a very long letter soon. Post it at Aden if you like but let me know as fully as you can of your doings in Stambul. Do tell me

¹Shaukatullah Ansari (1908-1973); elected to the first Lok Sabha from Bider constituency; represented India at the International Labour Conference in Geneva, 1955; assumed office as Governor of Orissa on January 31, 1968, and relinquished office in September 1971.

²Businessman and a resident of Fyzabad.

³Abdul Basit graduated from M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and went to London for journalism. He was on the staff of the *Bombay Chronicle*.

⁴Ahmad Ansari was a nephew of Dr. Ansari.

specially of the reasons and causes that led to Abdur Rahman's murder.

With *salaams* for Subhan⁵ and Haider⁶ and heartiest love from me.

Yours affectionately,
Abdur Rahman

⁵He was a correspondent of the *Times of India*, New Delhi.

⁶Businessman and a close friend of Abdur Rahman Siddiqi.

12. From Liaqat Ali Khan¹

London
2.8.1925

My dear Doctor Saheb,

I have not heard from you for a long time, nor have I written you a letter since I sent you one to your Constantinople address. I hope you are well, and have made up leeway in the matter of health. Your changed surroundings and the salubrity of Turkish climate must have restored you to normal health in no time.

I have been greatly perturbed by disquieting rumours during the last few days and this has been one of the causes interfering with my correspondence. I have, of course, been writing everything to my boss and you will be able to learn everything from him when you reach India. But I have every hope that the outcome will not belie anticipations. It is not safe to write to you everything, as you are constantly on the move, and this letter may not reach you at all. Besides this, it will not be more than three weeks hence when you reach India, and find out how things are shaping themselves. You will, of course,

¹1895-1951; educated at M.A.O. College, Aligarh; Allahabad University; Exeter College, Oxford; Inner Temple, London, joined Muslim League 1923; member, U.P. Legislative Council 1926-40; member, Central Legislative Assembly 1940-47; hon. general, secretary Muslim League 1936-47; deputy-leader, Muslim League Party in Central Legislature 1941-47; member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1946; held portfolio of Finance 1946-47, prime minister of Pakistan 1947-51.

make no mention of the fact that I gave you even a vague hint about these developments in my letter.

The long vacation has begun, and everybody is gone out of England. There will be no resumption of business till the middle of October. I shall, therefore, have to vegetate during this period, and nobody can say how much longer. I can't leave without permission, as telegrams are often coming in, and I am expected to answer them without delay. I shall be doing nothing during the next two months, and it would relieve some of my strain and ennui if I could go abroad on brief holiday excursions. But the present conditions are not very favourable to a cordial reception of my request, and if in the course of your conversation you may be able to arrange it as an unsolicited concession, and have a cable sent to me to this effect, it will be a great boon indeed. I shall be doing nothing even in September, and shall utilise this month for occasional trips out of London.

I hope you will also manage to find out if my boss has any appreciation for any little work that I have been doing up to my lights. There must be many people to belittle it and suggest a better way of doing things, and I shouldn't be surprised if he also thinks the same. Please don't mince matters when you write to me your impressions in September next.

I am a man who, in spite of his apparent sociability, has always preferred solitude to uncongenial company. But my God, there have been moments during the last few days when my solitude seemed to be driving me mad, and I wanted somebody to lighten my heavy burden. But there was nobody to whom I could confide a momentous secret, and I think my heart and brain must both have suffered from this severe strain.

London is a paradise for those who like woman, wine and chilly weather. Unfortunately I cannot indulge in any of these enjoyments, and a lonely man cannot really enjoy anything at all. My chambermaid—please don't misunderstand me—often sympathises with me, when she sees me moping alone in my room, and I return this sympathy with an occasional tip. But she does not know that I am a married man, and that feminine charms, of which she has a decent modicum, are not a panacea for all human ills. With best regards.

Yours as ever,
Liaquat Ali

13. To Shaukat Ali¹

Delhi
16.7.1926

Dear Sir,

After the retrograde turn, given to the Khilafat Committee at the Special Sessions, held at Delhi last May, I had felt I could no longer remain a member of that body. But on my return from England in June, I found that communal passions had run amuck and threatened to utterly destroy all that was noble and fine in this unfortunate motherland of ours. I, therefore, felt impelled to do all that lay in me to fight the demon of communalism which was devastating the country and was breaking asunder strong ties formed between the Hindus and Muslims after centuries of intimate associations and common sufferings and sacrifice. As an Indian owing allegiance first to the motherland, I feel I must sever my connections with all communal or sectional political organisations.

I beg you, therefore, to place my resignation before the Central Khilafat Committee at its earliest meeting. I shall from this day consider myself free from all obligations as a member of the Central Khilafat Committee.

I remain,

Your most obedient servant,
Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari

¹1873-1938; born into a family associated with the court of Rampur. His father had a zamindari income of Rs. 1250 p.m., but died while Shaukat was seven years old. His mother, Begum Abida Bano, later known as 'Bi Amma', sent him to Aligarh College in 1888; sub-deputy Opium Agent till 1912; organised Muslim University Fund collections; founded with Abdul Bari and M.H. Kidwai the *Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba*, 1913; interned with his younger brother, Mohammad Ali, May 1915 to December 1919; secretary, Central Khilafat Committee till his internment in September 1921; president, All-India Khilafat Conference at Coconada, 1923; became increasingly estranged with Congress after 1923 and led the campaign against the Nehru Report, 1928; one of the organisers of the All-India Muslim Conference, 1929-31; attended the Round Table Conference, 1931; member, Legislative Assembly, 1935.

14. To Sarojini Naidu*

Delhi
26.6.1977

My dear Akka,¹

I received your letter on the 22nd; but it has taken me quite a few days to decipher it. It does not speak much of the abilities of an aspirant to the presidential *gaddi*. I must frankly admit you have served me with stone when I had asked for bread. I had been expecting you to ascertain the opinions of the two persons who have my complete confidence, instead, you have sent me the views of two individuals which has left me cold and completely unconvinced. I am afraid I have seen them practice their machiavellian methods too often to believe they would ever expose the real motives underlying their utterances however earnest and plausible they may appear. I do not believe all that bunkum about the pact having better chance of general acceptance under a Hindu president than under a Muslim one, but I do believe that a very impartial, earnest, courageous and able leadership is the need of the moment. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League are today led by very clever and astute politicians, who would fight every inch of their ground and in order to match them you would need abler leadership in the Congress. For that the choice lies between the Nehru pin and the Nehru fil. With all deference to the great Nehru pin, I would vote plump for the Nehru fil. As, however, that opinion does not seem to be shared by the majority of the Congress men, I would support the father. I, however, doubt if the majority of the provinces would vote for Panditji, especially those which are over-run by Mahasabhaitees.

This brings me to Jinnah's declared intentions for the future. I believe he is a nationalist at heart, turned into a communalist by the exigencies of the time (like Jayakar) but I have little faith in any one who can change his conviction so readily to suit the circumstances. As regards the most generous offer of the presidentship of the League, please tell him I need no bribe to do what appears to me to

*For permission to include this letter, the editor is grateful to Dr. Azhar Ansari, Professor of History, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

¹1879-1949; poet and politician; fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society of Literature; president of the Kanpur session of the Congress, 1925; governor of Uttar Pradesh, 1947-9.

be in the highest interests of the country, though my reasons may be different from those expressed by him and the Maharaja.

I hope you would soon give me your final opinion and not use the women privilege of changing your mind so often and so suddenly. I shall not act until I hear from you. I am also writing to Panditji and Mahatmaji on the subject.

I was going tonight to Karachi to meet the beloved *Hajis* there but an urgent call from Bhopal has deflected me in another direction leaving *manjhle bhai* to go to Karachi alone.

With love to Bibi and self.

Yours affectionately,
Mukhtar

15. From M.K. Gandhi

Bangalore
26.8.1927

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I had your telegram. I hope you got my reply. Your published statement¹ is certainly an improvement on the original. But I cannot help thinking that it would have been better if you could have stayed your hand. But I fully recognise that you had no business to do so when the inner voice told you otherwise.

After having waited all these days, I felt that I should write just a brief thing for *Young India*. I send you a copy of the statement. If you think that I should not publish it, please wire. This letter should be in your hand at the latest on Monday. If I receive a wire from you disapproving of the statement, I shall cancel it. If the letter does not reach you before Tuesday, please wire direct to the Manager, *Young India* Office, Ahmedabad, asking him to withhold publication of the note. I am instructing the Manager not to publish the note if

¹Ansari criticised the policy pursued by the Swaraj Party in the legislatures and recommended the complete obliteration of the 'last vestiges of the tattered remains of non-cooperation that is sometimes seen in the legislatures'.

a countermanding wire is received from you. So much regarding the publication of my opinion.

Whether the note is published or not, I feel that the suggestion made in it is the only proper course for you to adopt, unless, of course, you feel strongly that those who enter the Councils must take up office and otherwise adopt the policy adumbrated in your statement, and that if you accept the Presidentship, you must actively work to that end. I recognise that you cannot take up an impartial attitude, if you must become an avowed propagandist of your own policy.

Three or four days ago when I had a long telegram from Motilalji,² I thought that in view of your statement, spontaneous retirement on your part was perhaps the best way of dealing with the difficult situation that had arisen. But I now feel that consistently with your views about the necessity of communal unity, you may not retire. But I feel equally that if you are to make a herculean effort for bringing about unity, you have to forget Council politics, adopt an attitude of absolute neutrality and act merely as an impartial chairman regulating proceedings of the Congress, All-India Congress Committee, and the Working Committee, but not guiding or shaping the political programme. And if you accept my suggestion, I think it would be necessary for you to make a very brief statement making it clear that whilst you adhere to the opinion expressed in your statement, you will not seek to impose that view upon the Congress but that you will confine your own activity solely to the promotion of communal unity.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi

²Before his departure to Bombay on 21 August *enroute* to London, Motilal Nehru strongly criticised Ansari's statement. 'The statement', said Motilal, 'has come upon me as a most painful surprise from a man of Dr. Ansari's undoubted patriotism and proved devotion to the country. . . . It does not appear from his statement that he has any political policy or programme of his own'.

16. On Dr. Ansari's Statement

Whilst I retain the opinion I tendered privately to Dr. Ansari that it would have been better if he had not published the statement of his views on the present political situation in the country, I recognise that

he had a perfect right to publish it. I felt before and feel now that his political views were irrelevant to the consideration of his election. Dr. Ansari's nomination has been acclaimed by the country for the hope it gives of his bringing about the desired communal unity. The statement unnecessarily complicates the situation. But in the process of our national evolution we will have to face many more complications. In my opinion, therefore, Dr. Ansari's election should stand in spite of his frank declaration. He must be allowed to devote his energies and utilise his high office for bringing about unity. Anyone who can bring about real unity will deserve the lasting gratitude of the country and will have made a great if not the greatest contribution to the attainment of Swaraj. Dr. Ansari is eminently fitted for the task. His political views need not affect the election. Congressmen have shown their ability on more occasions than one to initiate and enforce their own policy in the face of known different views of their chairman. And I presume that Dr. Ansari means no more by his statement than to let the country know his political views. I do not expect that he has any desire to use the presidential office for the purpose of enforcing his political views through the Congress. His integrity is the surest guarantee of his guiding the deliberations of the Congress as an absolutely impartial chairman and of his giving full effect to any agreement that may be arrived at by the various parties in the Congress.

M.K. Gandhi

17. Circular Letter :

Delhi
1.12.1927

Dear friend,

It is with a desire to serve the best interests of the country which are, I am sure, as dear to your heart as they are to mine, that I am addressing this letter to you. I do hope that the earnest request I am making will meet with a generous response.

Like every Indian patriot, you must have observed with feelings of

pain, the disastrous results of divided counsel and disunion in our efforts. Our energies are being frittered away, and, instead of success disappointment seems to dog our footsteps at every turn. The division in our ranks handicaps us seriously in every sphere of our activity and prevents us from making the will of the people prevail in quarters which control the destinies of India.

The most unfortunate aspect of the situation is that our differences are on mere matters of detail. We are, one and all, agreed on the goal we wish to achieve. This being so, I see no reason why we cannot put our heads together and find out a *modus operandi*, which will enable us to pool our efforts and render united service to our common motherland.

The advent of the Statutory Commission¹ in our midst at such a time brings us face to face with another issue of a most vital nature and affords one more argument, if any were still needed, for sinking our differences and acting jointly. Fortunately the opinions expressed on the Commission reveal a hopeful unanimity among all the schools of political thought.² If we take advantage of the opportunity thus presented to us to organise public union and focus it on the speedy attainment of our goal, we shall have created a force in our political life which shall be irresistible.

I cordially invite you to come to Madras and give the benefit of your valuable advice and mature experience to the Congress. I hope you will not disappoint me in my expectations to see a reunited Congress this year.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

¹The Statutory Commission was appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1919, to review the working of constitutional reforms in India, with Sir John Simon, MP, as its Chairman.

²In India the Statutory Commission was boycotted because it contained no Indian on its panel.

18. From Mohammad Yunus¹

Patna
3.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

It is really very good of you to have thought of an old friend, and to write to him on a subject which is of vital interest to all of us. We are not only observing with extreme pain the disastrous results of divided counsel and disunion in our efforts but we are realising and feeling the baneful results making life and property unsecure and unsafe at the very moment when one expects to enjoy his festivities.

I fully agree with you that on general political ground our differences are more on mere matters of detail and there is no doubt that we are, one and all, agreed on the goal which we wish to achieve.

I do think the expression of opinion on the constitution of the Statutory Commission, one way or the other, has been rather premature, and I only wish people of all sections and communities had waited till there was an authoritative pronouncement by the All-India Congress and All-India Muslim League. You are inclined to think that the opinion expressed on the Commission reveal a hopeful unanimity among all the sections of political thought. From various reports of ours I regret to find that far from being a hopeful unanimity there are discordant notes sounded from various directions.

I shall certainly try my best to go to Madras if I have not to go to Lahore or if I am not otherwise prevented from carrying out my present desire.

Yours sincerely,
Yunus

¹Editor of the English daily, *Patna Times*.

19. From B.C. Pal¹

Calcutta
3.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I have just received your kind letter of 1st December, and I hasten to

¹Bipin Chandra Pal (1858-1932); edited *New India*, the *Swaraj* (fortnightly) and *Hindu Review* (monthly); editor of *The Independent*. He took a prominent part in the agitation against the partition of Bengal and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in 1907. He resigned from the Indian National Congress because of his opposition to the adoption of Gandhi's non-cooperation programme.

assure you of my heartiest good wishes for the efforts you are putting forth to retrieve a situation that has been so complicated and perplexing, if not practically hopeless, for the time being. I have been feeling that the challenge of Tory Imperialism in England thrown out to us in the way the Statutory Commission has been constituted, is really God-sent to us. Providence has offered us another opportunity to close up our ranks, and render, as you put it, united service to our common motherland.

Your invitation to go to Madras is not to my mind of the usual formal type which is sent out by the President of the Congress every year. Both your well-known personality and the special circumstances under which the Congress meets this year at Madras, lends to your invitation a reality and seriousness which it is impossible to ignore. I shall try, if God helps me, to come to Madras; but what chance is there for men like me to do anything in the Congress under its present constitution ? So it seems to me that if you can arrange for an informal conference on the eve of the Congress between the representatives of the Congress and those who are at present outside it, for the purpose of finding out a *modus operandi*, it is likely to narrow, if not to completely fill up the existing gulf between the Congress and non-Congress Nationalists. Mr. Jinnah has been inviting us to Bombay for an all-party meeting. He says that he has been assured that Congress leaders would be willing to meet at Bombay between the 12th and 15th of December. I have wired to him to try and put the date a little later to enable those who will go to avail themselves of the usual Christmas concession granted by railway. I shall definitely try to go to Bombay and from there I may come to Madras. I think that men like myself will serve your object best by joining the informal deliberations of all parties before the Congress and simply giving their formal support to you on the first day of the session. In any case, you have, I need hardly assure you, my sincere prayers for the success of your patriotic endeavours to reunite political India once more upon a truly national platform, with an agreed plan and programme of united work.

With kindest wishes,

Yours sincerely,
Bipin Chandra Pal

20. From Mohammad Ali Mohammad, Raja of Mahmudabad

Lucknow
4.12.1927

My dear Doctor Saheb,

Very many thanks for your kind letter. It is very sad and regrettable that the Muslim League has practically gone in the hands of the reactionary element of the Muslim community and there is no chance of its being put right at the time of need. It is, however, satisfactory to learn that the parties in the Congress will at last be unanimous on the question of boycotting the Commission. You know my views on this question. I am extremely sorry I shall not be able to attend the Congress at Madras, but I am ready to send my message to the President of the Congress supporting the boycott and any proposal in that connection to make it more effective. Some of my enemies have written to the press that Sir Harcourt Butler¹ will be visiting Lucknow during the X-mas to keep me out from joining any anti-government movement. It is very ingenious of them to have sent this kind of mischievous message to the Press, which I do not mind the least, because the visit of Sir Harcourt Butler was arranged in September and his Highness the Nawab of Rampur invited him at the same time at Rampur. He is, therefore, visiting Rampur and Lucknow one after another. It is clear that no power in this world can keep me away from the national movement. You know the climate of Madras in December will mean a radical change for me which I wish to avoid. Had there been cooler climate in comparison to Lucknow I would have without hesitation proceeded to Madras.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Mohammad Ali Mohammad

¹Spencer Harcourt Butler (1869-1938), assistant magistrate and collector, Allahabad and Roorkee, 1890-2; held several important positions in the UP revenue department, 1893-1906; deputy-commissioner, Lucknow, 1908-10; lieutenant-governor and governor of the UP, 1918-23; governor of Burma, 1923-6.

21. From Joseph Baptista¹

Bombay
4.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Your letter is a pleasant surprise to me. Had I not retired from politics in despair I would have readily responded to your request. I cordially wish you all success as President of the Congress. I shall pray that God may inspire you with wisdom to give the right lead at the critical juncture. I anticipate that the dominant question before the Statutory Commission will be suitability of the system of Ministerial Responsibility to the representatives of the elections in the Legislature. This must be distinguished from the fitness of India for self-government, for self-government may take the autocratic, or the aristocratic, or the democratic form. I am afraid that the boycott of the Commission will retard the progress of democracy in India, and give a pretext to the Simon Commission and the British Cabinet to restore autocracy on the ruins of dyarchy. Sir John Simon² is no friend of Indian aspirations for Swaraj. I speak from personal contact with Sir John. Birkenhead³ is even worse. They proclaim the right of Parliament to determine the measure of advancement. This means the Party in power. Party means the Cabinet. And no Cabinet will go farther than the India Office and the Government of India recommendation. I was greatly impressed by Lloyd George's advice to get round Lord Irwin.⁴ He is regarded everywhere in Europe as a just and righteous English gentleman. Goodwill to Great Britain will go

¹1864-1931; took an active part in Indian Home Rule and labour movements; member, Legislative Assembly 1926-27; president, A.I. Trade Union Congress.

²1873-1954; chairman of the Indian Statutory Commission 1927-30; foreign secretary 1931-35; home secretary 1935-37; chancellor of the exchequer 1937-40; created Viscount, Lord Chancellor 1940-45.

³Frederick Edwin Smith, first Earl of Birkenhead (1872-1930); MP 1906-18; attorney-general 1915-19; lord chancellor 1919-22; secretary of state for India, 1924-28.

⁴Edward Frederick Lindley Wood, first Baron Irwin, and third viscount and first Earl of Halifax (1881-1959); under-secretary for Colonies 1921-22; viceroy of India 1926-31; lord Privy Seal 1935-37; foreign secretary 1938-40; ambassador at Washington 1941-46.

a greater way than boycott in any form.

With kind regards and renewed wishes for success from

Yours sincerely,
Joseph Baptista

22. From G.S. Khaparde¹

Amraoti
4.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am in receipt of your kind letter of first instant and very much regret that I am not in a position to meet your wishes in the matter mentioned therein, because first my health is not good enough to stand a long journey to Madras and the strain of a busy session of the Congress there. Secondly I feel almost certain that the proposed boycott of the Statutory Commission is not likely to succeed as the Punjab Muslims are against it.² Bombay Muslims are divided. U.P. is sitting on the fence and the Association of Landholders and Zamindars is against it. The Indian Christians and Anglo-Indians will not join and the non-Brahmins all over India are uncertain.³ Lastly all the parties in the British Parliament are agreed and present a menacing attitude. So in the absence of any other

¹Ganesh Shrikrishna Khaparde (1854-1938); educated in Berar and Bombay; Extra Asstt. Commissioner in Berar from 1885 to 1889; Vice-Chairman of the local Municipality and Chairman of the District Board for nearly seventeen years; member, Viceroy's Legislative Council; member of the Council of State; re-elected in 1925.

²In the Punjab, Mohammad Shafi and Firoz Khan Noon committed the Muslim League in favour of the Statutory Commission. As a result, the All-India Muslim League Council, which was dominated by the boycotting Muslims, reversed its decision of holding the annual League session at Lahore and chose Calcutta as the venue. This move was bitterly opposed by Shafi and his followers, and in the end two separate sessions were held, one in Lahore and the other in Calcutta.

³The Justice Party in Madras joined Congressmen in boycotting the Simon Commission. On 25 January 1928, a resolution to boycott the Commission was carried in the Madras Legislative Council by a majority of thirty-two.

alternative it would be wise to do our best to secure all we can and fight for the rest. Your idea of having a united Congress is entirely good and I wish you success most heartily. Everything will depend on what you do at Madras. My sentiments and sympathies are all with you but reason rebels from the course proposed. I would, if I could, adopt the Commonwealth of India Bill prepared by Dr. Besant and make it the basis of our negotiations.

I hope you will not take it amiss that I can not be at Madras to discuss the whole thing personally. Heartily wishing you success.

Yours sincerely,
G.S. Khaparde

23. From Abdur Rahim¹

Calcutta
7.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am in receipt of your letter.

As you might have noticed from my published utterances, I fully appreciate the importance of the critical situation with which we are threatened and I have not the least doubt that the remedy is entirely in our hands. What we need at the present moment most is to recognise frankly the differences that exist and proceed at once to settle them. This is only possible if the leaders of different important communities and political parties would meet and confer as soon as possible and agree upon the form of constitution we want, its main outlines and the essential points—whether of detail or principle—which are the subject of controversy at present. That, of course, is not possible on the Congress platform, and a special Conference of a few influential representative men has to be called for the purpose and in my opinion it must be done in time to enable it to conclude its labours before the

¹(1867-1952); lawyer of the Calcutta High Court; judge of the Madras High Court 1910 and 1920; member, Bengal Legislative Council 1926; minister, Bengal Government 1927; member, Central Legislative Assembly 1930; president Central Legislative Assembly 1935-45.

legislators are called upon to take any particular action with reference to the Simon Commission. In the meantime it ought to be our utmost endeavour to bring about harmony of opinion and action in the Muslim League, so that we may definitely know what the Muslim community wants, for otherwise it would be useless to confer with others. We must first of all put our own house in order, I mean each group. Then alone we shall be in a position to take concerted action.

I am sorry it will not be possible for me to attend the Congress in Madras and I do not think even if I was able to do so, I should have been able thereby to advance the main work that is before us. Many thanks for your kind invitation.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Abdur Rahim

24. From Annie Besant¹

Madras
7.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Thank you for your very kind letter, with which I cordially agree.

I think the coming of the Statutory Commission has given us a splendid opportunity of joining up our forces, and the way that the boycott has swept the country, all parties sharing in it, will do much towards opening up the way to common work. If the National Congress at Madras, under your guidance, and the Muslim League in Calcutta, would each appoint a small Committee to examine any

¹(1847-1933); British theosophist and political leader. She joined the Theosophical Society in 1891 and was its President from 1907 till her death. During World War she founded the Home Rule League and was interned by the Government of India. In 1917 she was elected Congress President. At the annual session of the Congress at Madras in December 1927, she moved a joint resolution with Srinivasa Iyengar deploring the Secretary of State's utter 'disregard of India's right of self-determination, and pledging Congressmen to boycott the Simon Commission.

Constitutions for India which have appeared, giving her Dominion Status as a free Nation within the Empire, and if those Committees kept in touch with each other, and finally had a joint meeting to agree on a common draft, the presentation of that as India's demand to Parliament would be the most effective reply to any report which the Commission may ultimately make.

I am a member of the Reception Committee here, so will be one of those to receive you, and I trust we may have several opportunities of discussing things together.

Do you not think it would be a good thing if the Congress sent a small deputation to the Muslim League, and if the Muslim League also sent a small deputation to the Congress ? We used to visit each other when we met in the same place, and this should be kind of re-knitting of our friendly alliances.

With very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Annie Besant

25. From Mohammad Yaqub¹

Moradabad
7.12.1927

My dear Doctor Saheb,

Thank you very much for your circular letter dated the 1st instant. I quite agree with you that a large number of Muslims should attend the Congress this year. It was for this reason that I wanted the annual session of the All-India Muslim League either at Calcutta or Madras, but the unexpected decision of the Council of the League has upset the whole arrangement. However, I have made another effort to have the decision of the Council revised and another meeting

¹Maulvi Mohammad Yaqub (1879-194); presided over the U P. Muslim League session 1926, and the annual session of the All-India Muslim League, Calcutta 1927; member, Legislative Assembly 1924-38; deputy-President 1927-30; president 1930; hony. Secretary, All-India Muslim League 1930-35; member of the Council 1938-42.



'Dar-us- Salam', the residence of Dr. M A. Ansari and the venue of several Important meetings.

of the Council will be held at Delhi on the 11th instant. Please exert all your influence and secure a majority of the Council of the League in favour of Calcutta and the Aga Khan. You will also realise that it will be suicidal for the Muslims to leave the League this year in the hands of the reactionaries and allow them to carry the day according to their wishes. It is therefore equally necessary that we should also try our best to muster in large numbers at the League meeting and mould the Muslim opinion.

Yours sincerely,
M. Yaqub

26. From Ibrahim Rahimtoola¹

Bombay
7.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Many thanks for your letter of the 1st instant.

As you are aware I have to go to Madras to attend the All-India Industrial & Commercial Congress which is going to meet on the 29th instant. I am arranging to go there a few days earlier in order to enable me to participate in meetings which we may call for the laudable object you have in view. I have been strongly of the opinion that the political progress of our motherland can only be advanced by a genuine unity and all my sympathies are in favour of any efforts which are genuinely made in that direction. If the Indian National Congress reverts to its national character it will be a great achievement and I wish you every success in your efforts. If I can be of any help in that direction my services are always available.

Yours very sincerely,
Ibrahim Rahimtoola

¹1862-1942; a successful businessman of Bombay; entered Bombay Municipal Corporation in 1892, and became its president in 1899; member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1899-1916; president, Legislative Council, 1923-26; president, Legislative Assembly, 1931; resigned in 1933.

27. From K. Natarajan¹

Bombay
7.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Many thanks for your very kind letter of the 1st instant. I entirely agree with you that the present is a favourable opportunity for attempting to bring all parties together in the pursuit of our common ideal, and I am very glad indeed that you are taking up the matter in right earnest. I wish you every success in your patriotic attempt.

I am going to Madras to preside over the National Social Conference and I shall be very pleased indeed to attend the Congress under your Presidentship and to give any little assistance in my power to carry out your great object.

With kind regards,

Your sincerely,
K. Natarajan

¹Kamakshi Natarajan (1868-1948); edited the *Indian Social Reformer* for nearly fifty years; president, Mysore Civic and Social Progress Conference, 1921, and president, National Social Conference, Ahmedabad, 1921; president, 40th Indian National Social Conference, Madras, 1927.

28. From Syed Hasan Imam¹

Patna
7.12.1927

My dear Ansari,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 1st instant inviting me to Madras and all that I can say is that I wish I were in a position

¹1871-1933; educated in Patna and in England; called to the Bar (Middle Temple), 1882; practiced at Patna and Calcutta until 1911; judge of the Calcutta High Court, 1912-16; president of the Special Congress session held in September 1918; launched a bi-weekly, *Searchlight*, 1918; president, All-India Home Rule League; delegate to London Conference on Turkish Peace Treaty, 1921; much involved in the agitation against the Simon Commission, 1927; took a leading part in the Civil Disobedience movement.

during the Christmas week to attend the Congress. I fully agree with you that at this juncture in the political history of the country we need to have a concert of people of all shades of political opinion. I am, however, unhappily situated in regard to my engagements. For the last few years my Christmas holidays have had to be given to some personal concerns of mine which disable me from utilizing the Christmas week to any other purpose. I have been sincerely happy at your election to the Presidentship of the Congress this year and now that an extraordinary situation has arisen I feel that no one could have been found more fitted to guide the deliberations of the Congress than yourself at this moment. Of course, you know that I am for what is called boycott of the Commission and I sincerely hope that there will be no dissentient voice in the Congress as against the general view that seems to be of the country on this topic. I regret very much that I shall not be able to attend the Congress this year.

Yours affectionately,
Syed Hasan Imam

29. From G. D. Birla¹

Pilani
8.12.1927

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am sorry I will not be able to attend the Congress due to my illness, nor will, I think, be able to leave this place before three to four months. I write this in reply to your circular. Please persuade Gandhiji to take lead at this critical juncture. I am afraid, all our talk about boycott may eventually prove to be an empty threat. I hope you have read Pandit Malaviyaji's articles. He has taken a very extreme view and I am at one with him. Whatever action we take, it must be united action. We should not allow the Moderates to slip out from the present situation. We should also try to bring about a compromise

¹B. 1894; industrialist and a close associate of Gandhi. He was a member of the Central Legislative Assembly from which he resigned as a protest against legislation for Imperial Preference.

between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Calcutta resolutions were in principle very good, but they have been accepted neither by communalist Hindus nor by communalist Muslims. You should try to bring about the Hindu Sabha and the Muslim League to a common agreement. How I wish the Simon Commission should meet the same fate as the Milner Commission met in Egypt. I hope that Madras will try to convene a conference of all the leaders of all shades of opinion and put forward a common programme before the country. Please consider over the suggestion of Motilalji and Malaviyaji about vacating Assembly seats.

Please let me know if I could be of any use

I hope you are quite well

Yours sincerely,
G. D. Birla

30. From Tej Bahadur Sapru

Allahabad
9.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am much obliged to you for your letter of the 1st December. I entirely agree with you that our differences have had the most disastrous results, and should be very glad indeed if these differences could be removed. In your attempts to remove these differences you have my cordial sympathies and in my individual capacity I should be quite willing to give you any assistance that lies in my power.

¹1875-1949; advocate, Allahabad High Court, 1896-1926; member, UP Legislative Council, 1913-16; member, Imperial Legislative Council, 1916-20; member, All-India Congress Committee, 1905-17; president, UP Liberal League, 1918-20; president, All-India Liberal Federation, 1923; member, Reforms Enquiry Committee, 1924; played a leading role in the making of the Nehru Report, 1928; delegate to the Round Table Conferences, 1930-32; member, Joint Select Committee on Indian Reforms, 1933. 'It has been a very hum-drum sort of life', Sapru said on his seventieth birthday, 'punctuated in private spheres by occasional moments of happiness and more by sorrow than anything else. In public life there has been nothing remarkable except that I have represented a school of thought which is on the wane.'

I thank you for your kind invitation to Madras. It is, however, impossible for me to go to Madras as I am required to be present at the Liberal Federation which is to be held at the same time in Bombay.

On the question of the Statutory Commission there seems to be so much agreement between the different parties, and I believe there is and will be, so much agreement on the general question of Constitution for India that I think it would be a pity if all parties could not make a joint pronouncement on these two subjects. I suggest to you the possibility of different parties appointing their representatives to meet at a common place, and to help each other in preparing a draft Constitution to be laid before their respective parties for common approval. This should be a uniting factor and should bring different parties together. I realise, and I have no doubt you also realise, that on some questions of method of work there is, and has been, during the last ten years an unfortunate difference between the parties. I do not see any reason why each party should not reserve to itself its own method of work while all should unite in putting forward the same Constitution and working for it jointly as far as possible. The atmosphere created by recent events appears to me to be favourable to united action on the lines indicated above.

In the end I wish to assure you of my cordial wishes for your success as President of the Congress and in the yet greater task which you have so courageously applied yourself, namely, the removal of the communal strife which has been a prolific source of mischief during the last three years. On this point I need scarcely give you the assurance that my sympathies are with you.

With kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,
Tej Bahadur Sapru

31. From Sri Prakasa¹

Banaras Cantt.
10.12.1927.

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am deeply grateful to you and your private secretary for the kindness and courtesy shown to me in the matter of the advance copy of your

presidential address. Pardon my presumption when I say it, but I cannot resist the temptation to say that I feel, without any disrespect to your distinguished predecessors in your high office, that your speech is the finest that has been delivered from the Congress presidential chair. The dignity and clarity, the tolerance and kindness that you have exhibited in your speech are all remarkable. The lead you give for the framing of a constitution, the importance you attach to health and civic duty, the sorrow you express at the apathy of our people and the terrible social evils that are eating our national life—are as characteristic as important. After ten years spent entirely in public life in many humble spheres, I have been driven to the conclusion that unless the general mass do really feel a love for liberty, and unless every one loves and adheres to his rights and duties, no amount of effort on the part of a few great leaders of the land could help the nation to grow. I am deeply thankful to you for having drawn the people's attention to those important matters and for having boldly upheld the Congress above everything else, and forced it not only to look to politics but also to communal, social and individual evils. I offer you my respectful congratulations.

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

32. From Hansraj¹

Lahore
10.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari jee,

Thanks for your kind invitation to attend the Congress at Madras. Since the Golden Jubilee of the Lahore Arya Samaj will be celebrated during the Christmas, I am not inclined to be away from those celebrations. You will kindly excuse me for this.

My own idea is that Hindu and Muslim leaders should draw up a programme of constructive work. Only that kind of work on which there is full agreement should be taken in hand, and that on

¹(1860-1938); one of the active leaders of the Arya Samaj in the Punjab; acted as president of the Arya Congress held in Delhi, November 1927; took a leading part in the *shuddhi* campaign of 1923.

which there are differences between the Hindus and the Muslims should be eschewed. Common work will generate a spirit of comradeship, and ultimately lead to better appreciation of each other's standpoint. More stress should be laid on practical work jointly undertaken than on the issuing of manifestos which contain either platitudes on unity or schemes of compromises unacceptable to everybody excepting the signatories themselves. Let efforts be made to remove bitterness, and let us unite in matters of common interest.

Wish you success in the discharge of onerous duties imposed upon you.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
Hansraj

33. From Har Bilas Sarda¹

Ajmer
10.12.1927

Dear Dr. M.A. Ansari,

I am grateful to you for your kind invitation to attend the coming session of the Indian National Congress at Madras. I realise the gravity of the situation and the extreme desirability of all political workers to meet together, discuss in a fraternal earnest spirit the requirements of the situation, and take a proper and unanimous decision as to the measures to be adopted for the vindication of the honour of our common fatherland. And though I can hardly contribute towards the attainment of the object so dear to us all, I should have certainly attended the session at Madras, were it not for the fact that the meeting of the Paropkarni Sabha, of which I am Secretary, has been fixed to be held at Ajmer on 29th December, 1927. And this was done three months ago. I regret my inability to go to Madras during the

¹1868-1955; senior judge, Chief Court, Jodhpur, 1925; member, Legislative Assembly, 1924, 1927 and 1930; deputy-leader, Nationalist Party in Legislative Assembly; author of Child Marriage Restraint Act, popularly known as the 'Sarda Act'.

Christmas week and apologise for it. I am, however, ready to co-operate with you earnestly in the furtherance of the cause of our country in any way that I can.

Wishing you success in your patriotic endeavours.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Har Bilas Sarda

34. From C.Y. Chintamani¹

Dear Dr. Ansari,

10.12.1927

I am honoured by the invitation which you as President-elect have courteously sent to me to the next session of the National Congress at Madras. I should have been glad, if it had been possible for me, to comply with the wishes of so earnest and respected a public worker as yourself; the more so as I gratefully recognise that you have been since the early days striving for a settlement of communal differences. I regret, however, that on those very days my presence is required at Bombay where the annual session of the Liberal Federation will be held. And I am still one of the general secretaries of that body. I trust in the circumstances you will excuse me for the inability to attend the Congress. I hope that under your leadership the Congress may be advised to follow a line of policy which will facilitate joint action by Congressmen and Liberals in the common interests of the motherland at this critical juncture. No one will rejoice more heartily than I as an old Congressman at the consummation of this wish of all.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Chintamani

¹Chiravoori Yajneswara Chintamani (1880-1941); editor of the *Leader* (Allahabad), 1909-23 and 1926-41; member, UP Legislative Council, 1916-23; general secretary, National Liberal Federation of India, 1918-20; and 1923-29; minister of Education and Industries, UP, 1921-23; member, UP Legislative Council, 1927-36; member, Round Table Conference, 1930; president of the All-India Anti-Communal Award Conference, 1935, and All-India Journalists Conference 1935; knighted in 1939; author of *Indian Social Reform* and *Indian Politics Since the Mutiny*, and edited the *Speeches and Writings of Sir Pherozeshah Mehta*.

35. From Haji Hafiz Hidayet Hosain¹Cawnpore
12.12.1927

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am very much flattered by your kind invitation to come to Madras to attend the Congress meeting there, and much indeed as I should like to respond to your kind invitation, I regret that it would not be possible for me to do so.

We are divided communities and my own impression is that the Congress is of little use to us at the present juncture. Congresses and Conferences are after all mere surrender to human weakness for display, as substitute for practical work and I cannot place the Indian National Congress on a higher pedestal than this. It is admitted on all hands that no political advancement is possible till the Hindus and the Muslims unite; what have even the Congressmen done to secure this unity. Indeed some of the Congress workers have been the worst offenders in this respect. Has the Congress even as a body attempted to go to the root cause of the Hindu-Muslim riots? Have you realised that it is only since 1923, when the *shuddhi* and *sangathan*s were started that these riots began to repeat themselves with such frequent obstinacy? Nobody has got a right to take exception to these movements but if the object of the *shuddhi* were merely political and pursued by physical force, threat, violence and fraud in order to reduce the numerical strength of the Muslims for no other than political purpose, and if the object of the *sangathan* is to preach the gospel of hate against the Muslims, then I think these movements can secure no other purpose except the creation of an unbridgeable gulf between the two communities. Then, again, has the Congress ever tried to discover the genesis of these riots? Is it not a fact that these riots are the resultant effect of an organisation started for the purpose of humiliating the Muslims and weakening them socially, economically and physically?

If the Congress has not tried to travel to the root cause of these differences, how is it possible for it to suggest any remedy for them?

¹(1881-1935); one of the founders of the All-India Muslim League and the All-India Muslim Conference; British Indian delegate to the Round Table Conference; member of the U.P. Legislative Council. Publications: Brochure on the Moslem case submitted to the Round Table Conference in 1930; memorandum for the Simon Commission on the Indian Reforms Question.

Mere honeyed phrases and an appeal couched in eloquent and winsome phraseology to the communities to live in amity and grace have never proved to be of any avail. You cry in the wilderness every year and this year you may repeat the same process over again. It may do your soul some good, but it does nothing to us. The Congress does not represent the Hindus now, it has never represented the Muslims. You are then a group of men, well meaning, well intentioned, honest and sincere, but all the same afraid to look at things at their face, incapable of tapping the root cause of differences and therefore impotent to devise effective means of cure. This is my humble opinion of the Congress as a body.

I am afraid I have been impertinent; truth has to be told at this stage of our existence.

Your sincerely,
Hafiz Hidayet Hosain

36. From Harkishen Lal¹

Lahore
12.12.1927

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Many thanks for your kind remembrance and invitation to Madras. I am at your service for anything that I can do to advance the cause of the motherland, but as I am no longer a member of the Congress organisation, I cannot be expected to attend the coming sessions in that capacity.

Besides that, the Congress is now for an old man like me too big an organisation to be of any practical use. I wish you success in your patriotic efforts and I have no doubt you will be successful in your mission as I feel that it is disinterested as it should be.

Yours sincerely,
Harkishen Lal

¹(1864-1937); educated in Lahore and Cambridge, England, returned to Lahore in 1890 and served as professor of mathematics at the Government College and part-time professor in the Oriental College; helped to found the Punjab National Bank of Lahore in 1895; acted as President of the Punjab Congress Committee and head of the reception committee for the Lahore Congress, 1909; arrested and put on trial before special tribunal in connection with the Punjab Martial Law, 1919; served as a minister in the Punjab government under the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

37. From M.K. Gandhi

Sabarmati
14.4.1928

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I have your letter. If the meeting of the representatives of mill-owners comes off and if you give me due notice, I shall be present. But up to now there is no intimation from Motilalji.

I am in constant touch with the representatives of millowners and so far as I am aware nothing is going to come out of these negotiations. The mill-owners have decided upon a separate organisation of their own from which they wish to eschew politics altogether. Sir Purshotamdas has declined to be President even of this association. And I understand that he has come to the conclusion that the mill-owners will do nothing substantial at the present moment. Mr. Birla writes to me almost in the same strain, though he wants the boycott campaign without the mill-owners. After having had so many chats and so much correspondence with the latter, I incline to the same view. But that does not mean that we should not have the conference Motilalji has in view.

You will keep me informed of what is going on. I would like you to read all I have written about the mills in the pages of *Young India*. If you have not the articles I can send them to you.

I wish you will settle the Jamia constitution¹ without delay.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi

¹Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi.

38. From Motilal Nehru

Allahabad
17.4.1928

My dear Ansari,

I hope you have come back to Delhi from Bhopal. The Bombay mill-owners have proved even worse than I expected. I enclose copy of the telegram from Lalji Naranji which was referred to in my telegram to you. It would have been a wild goose chase to go to Bombay

simply to wait upon the pleasure of individual mill-owners. As you are aware these mill-owners reaped a rich harvest during our first intensive campaign for the boycott of foreign cloth. They are evidently expecting the same results by our next campaign. They are a mean and selfish lot and should in my opinion be taught a lesson which they are not likely to forget. I am quite ready with my plan of action to teach them this lesson but I am not sure that Gandhiji will approve of it. So far as the boycott of foreign cloth is concerned we cannot act independently of him. I am therefore submitting a skeleton scheme in the accompanying note to him and to you for the approval of both. Please let me know what you think of it. It may be necessary for you and me to meet Gandhiji in this connection. I am on the unemployed list having no Bhopal, Rampur or other gold mines to work and am always available. If Gandhiji desires to see us in connection with my scheme I shall wire to you. Please let me know your programme for the next fortnight.

After the accompanying note was typed I read in today's papers that Jawahar has been addressing his audiences on similar lines.

Jawahar is expected to return today from his Punjab tour.

Your affectionately,
Motilal Nehru

39. From Purshotamdas Thakurdas

Bombay
27.4.1928

Dear Sir,

With reference to Resolution No. 2 passed at the All-Parties Conference at Delhi regarding enquiry into the financial aspects of the separation of Sind,¹ I beg to communicate to you the stage at which my

¹On 11 March 1928, the All-Parties Conference held in Delhi appointed a Committee to report 'whether when separated the new province of Sind would be self-supporting'. The Committee consisted of Haji Abdullah Haroon, a leading Khilafat leader of Sind, Khan Bahadur Shah Nawaz Khan Bhutto, Jairamdas Doulatram, Jamshed Mehta, President of the Karachi Municipality and author of a pamphlet entitled 'Separation of Sind', Bhai Ishar Das, President of Karachi Singha Sabha, and Professor Chabiani of the University of Delhi. Purshotamdas Thakurdas was the Chairman of the Committee.

work has reached so far. On my return to Bombay I sent a circular letter to all the members of the Committee on 4th April last, requesting them to let me have their views. Seth Haji Abdoola Haroon and Jamshed N.R. Mehta have not yet sent me their views, but have written to say that they expect to send me their views shortly. Khan Bahadur Bhutto intimated to me by his telegram dated the 17th instant that he was unable to act on the Committee. I immediately got in touch with his substitute Shaikh Abdul Majid Saheb by my letter to him of the 18th instant, and I have had no reply from him. Prof. Chablani and Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram appear to have nothing to add to Professor Chablani's pamphlet³ putting forward the case against the separation, but they wish to examine any statement which may be submitted to me before I convene a meeting. As no such statement has yet been received by me from either Seth Haji Abdoola Haroon or Mr. Mehta, I am unable to fix a date for the meeting. Bhai Ishar Das, President of the Singha Sabha, Karachi, has not yet replied to my circular letter of the 4th instant.

In view of this I am unable to convene a meeting of the members of the committee to discuss the problem. In the meantime I have today received a letter from Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram in which he suggests that I should "consider the question of moving the President of the Congress to postpone the date of the All Parties Conference to enable the Committee to finalise its work and prepare the report". I pass this suggestion on to you as requested. If you should require any further information please let me know. I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Jairamdas Doulatram for his information.

Yours truly,
Purshotamdas Thakurdas

²B. 1892; leading Congressman of Sind, member, Bombay Legislative Council, 1926-8; general secretary of the Congress, 1931-4; governor of Bihar, 1947; governor of Assam, 1950-6.

³See H.L. Chablani, *Financial Aspects of the Separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency* in Thakurdas Papers (72/2), Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi.

40. From Motilal Nehru

Allahabad
1.5.1928

My dear Ansari,

The next meeting of the All Parties Conference is approaching, but I have very serious doubts of its success. It will be an awful shame if it ends in fiasco. The Hindu Sabha since the last meeting very much hardened its attitude and will send its irreconcilables with a mandate to agree to nothing. The Muslim League without Jinnah is impossible to get at and will probably take no part in the Conference. The responsivists in my opinion are playing a double game. The Sikhs as you know are satisfied with the Delhi proceedings of the Conference. The only class of people outside the Congress who seem to be serious about the boycott are the Liberals though it is impossible to say how long their present attitude will continue. It seems to me that long before the Simon Commission returns to India our colleagues of the other parties will have left us one after another and the Congress alone will have to bear the whole brunt. How far it will be able to do so is problematical. Without funds and without the help of the mill-owners it is not possible even to make a decent show of the boycott of the foreign cloth. The prospect is thus gloomy enough but we cannot sit idle.

In spite of the poor prospect of the Bombay meeting of the All Parties Conference we must make a violent effort to make it a success. If we can get the Muslim League and the Liberal League to be present in respectable numbers we shall achieve the maximum success that can reasonably be achieved. The Hindu Sabha should really have been kicked out in Delhi but if that was not done there is no reason why we should not adopt a stronger attitude in Bombay. To repeat an old story it is no use allowing a diseased limb to dangle by your side and obstruct your movements. There is I think still a chance of all others coming to some sort of an agreement and we must concentrate upon this.

I think you and I should both write personal letters to the leading members of the Muslim and Liberal Leagues. I will talk to Tej Bahadur, and Chintamani and will write to Mohammad Yaqub, Raja Ghazanfar Ali and Shafi Daudi.¹ You should also write to these and

¹B. 1879; vakil of the Patna High Court; member of the Legislative Assembly, 1924-35.

also others that you can think of impressing upon them the great importance of the Bombay meeting and offering all the encouragement and inducement that you are capable of. I think I would tell the Muslim Leaguers plainly that the Congress does not identify itself with the resolution passed by the Hindu Sabha at Jubbulpore and that it will stand by the Madras resolution.

Have you received the reports of the sub-committees appointed by us? I have received no reply from Purshotamdas yet and have no information about Srinivasa Iyengar's² sub-committee. It will be a disgraceful thing if the reports of these committees are not available to the Conference.

Please buck up and infuse some spirit in lifeless people.

Yours affectionately,
Motilal Nehru

²(1874-1941); advocate-general of Madras; deputy leader of the Swarajist Party in the Central Legislative Assembly; president of the Indian National Congress at Gauhati, 1926.

41. From Purshotamdas Thakurdas

Bombay
3.5.1928

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Your telegram of the 2nd instant. I am afraid it is not possible to complete this inquiry within a week or a fortnight as suggested by you. It is not possible for me to go to Karachi until, in any case, I know what the Muslim side are relying upon. I had a letter from Pandit Motilal Nehru two days back wherefrom I gather that it is very likely that the All Parties Conference at Bombay this month may be postponed. Whether there is any chance of it or not, I am afraid any report that may be got up, until both sides put up their case to the Committee, and the Committee had time to investigate the details, will not be of much value. I am afraid this may be a little inconvenient to you, but if the parties interested do not put up their case, I cannot do more.

Yours sincerely,
Purshotamdas Thakurdas

42. From Jawaharlal Nehru

Allahabad
3.5.1928

My dear Ansari,

Thank you for your letter of the 1st May. I have also received a copy of Sir Purshotamdas's letter. I have shown both to my father. He and I feel that the All Parties Conference should not be postponed at this stage and we should go ahead as you have yourself suggested in your letter. At his suggestion I have proposed to Sir Purshotamdas that he might convene a meeting of the Sind Committee some days before the All Parties Conference so that they may have some time to discuss the question. I enclose a copy of my letter to Sir Purshotamdas¹. I should like you also to press him to do so. A similar request might also be made to the other sub-committee that was appointed although Srinivasa Iyengar will be on the high seas then.

I have convened a meeting of the Working Committee for the 16th afternoon in Mrs. Naidu's room at the Taj at 5.30 pm., and the All Parties Conference at 2 p.m. on the 19th May.

I am enclosing an agenda for the Working Committee as well as a short note I am sending to members.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

¹See Jawaharlal Nehru to Purshotamdas, 3 May 1928, Thakurdas Papers (72/1), Nehru Memorial Museum & Library, New Delhi.

Enclosure :

WORKING COMMITTEE OF THE A.I.C.C.

A meeting of the Working Committee will be held on Wednesday May 16th 1928 at 5.30 p.m. in the rooms of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu at the Taj Mahal Hotel, Bombay.

Agenda

1. To confirm minutes.

2. Quarterly statement of A.I.C.C. office account from 1st December 1927 to 29th February 1928 and monthly statements of accounts for March and April 1928.
3. Consideration of the proceedings of the All Parties Conference and drawing up of a Swaraj constitution.
4. Boycott of foreign cloth.
5. To fix a date for the next A.I.C.C. meeting.
6. Letter from Hindustani Seva Dal asking for a grant.
7. Letter from League for Prevention of Unemployment.
8. Letters from Secretary, U.P. Council Congress Party, and Nemi Saran Jain, M.L.C., regarding Council work.
9. Matters referred by the All-India Congress Committee.

Other matters that may be brought up with the permission of the Chair.

Allahabad
3.5.1928

J. Nehru
General Secretary

43. From Shuaib Qureshi

Bombay
7.5.1928

My dear Doctor Saheb,

You must have received my telegram by now. I was at Bhopal for over a week in connection with Abdur Rahman's illness. I had no idea to get down there and the arrangement was that Basit and I were to start from Lucknow and Haider and Abdur Rahman were to join at Bhopal and then together we were to proceed to Aurangabad to spend some time with Maulana Abdul Haq, whom Abdur Rahman was very anxious to meet, and visit Ajanta and Ellora. At Bhopal station, however, Haider gave the news that Rahman was lying bandaged up unable to move about or even turn in bed without extreme pain. Basit and I, therefore, got down. We would have waited for Rahman to get quite well but we had stayed the maximum period allowed by our tickets and the day we left Rahman could walk not with ease of course and not without help, but on his own feet for about ten or fifteen yards. He was feeling distinctly better. He expected to follow us after a week. Today, however, I have received a letter from him saying that the improvement had stopped, he dreaded sitting on the commode and that numbness along the

nerve was still there while Dr. Rahman had left with His Highness on a tour of three weeks. So Rahman is held up there though the telegram of congratulations I have sent to Mohammad Ali might give the impression that he has returned to Bombay. Coming to Congress work I spoke to Srinivasa Iyengar. He had no report at all to give. Shanmukan Chetty received your telegram giving Mohd. Ali's views on proportional representation. He showed it to me at the pier and said he agreed with them. I asked him to write his views and formally send them to me so that they might be put on record and also make Srinivasa do the same and post the two from Aden. That is all you will or rather can have on proportional representation. I mean single transferable vote.

As to Sind, Sir Purshotamdas's letter must have given you the whole situation. If you want a report from the Committee you must postpone the Conference and on this as well as on general grounds of expediency Srinivasa advised postponement till August. Mrs. Naidu for different reasons was of the same opinion in the beginning but later as a result of discussion with Jinnah changed her mind and must have written to you her views. Sir Purshotamdas also wanted postponement.

But the question may be put is it any use having these reports and postponing the Conference for them? The only excuse for entertaining and discussing proposals different from Congress resolutions was that they might be acceptable to extremists amongst the Hindus and Muslims alike and agreement was to be preferred to principles. But now that it is evident that you cannot bring the Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League together specially after the attitude of the former at Jubbulpore, why should we waste any more time over proposals which cannot be defended either on grounds of expediency or principle. We must decide to stand by the Congress resolution which is based on or as embodying Delhi proposals.² Neither Calcutta nor Jubbulpore. And if it is going to be neither Padma nor Narbada why waste valuable time by postponing conference on account of

²On the 20th March, 1927 some prominent Muslim leaders put forward certain proposals which have come to be known as the "Delhi proposals". These proposals laid down that the Muslims were prepared to agree to joint electorates in all provinces and in the central legislature provided (1) Sind was made into a separate province. (2) The N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan were treated on the same footing as the other Provinces. (3) In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation was in accordance with the population. (4) In the Central Legislature Muslim representation was not less than one-third.

reports which may be very interesting from the academic point of view or even from the point of view of administrative details but are of no practical value. Therefore give Sindh Committee a week or fortnight more. They would not come to a decision even after that, but you would have strengthened your hands and the case for Congress resolutions. Hold the Conference then and adopt the Congress resolution and shape the programme of political activities on that basis. That will leave the Sikh problem to be solved. For that we will have to find some solution if we can. In the meantime, however, the Working Committee must meet in Bombay as arranged and formally decide to adopt this line of action. I don't know if you fully agree with these views.

If you are coming here you will be getting down at Bhopal as you wrote in your letter. You will then, of course, see Rahman. If you think you can or should bring him here bring him with you.

For Basit I went to Brelvi twice but did not find him. Today he phoned me up and I have arranged to meet him at his office at three. I am not taking Basit with me. He will meet him later. I hope I will fix him up there. I have not seen Horniman in deference to your wishes in the matter although I am still of the same opinion. I will, however, consult Brelvi too on the point. I will write to you the result of my interview. I showed Srinivasa your telegram about his donation to the Jamia. He said he had not sufficient money with him here and could not spare the amount. But he promised to write to his son to send the amount from Madras. I handed over your two letters of introduction to Srinivasa and wrote one myself for. . . .

With love from Basit, Haider, myself.

Very affectionately yours,
Shuaib

44. From Iswar Saran¹

Allahabad
7.5.1928

My dear Ansari,

Very many thanks for your inviting me to Bombay. You know my heart is in this work but another public duty—pray note that it is

¹Munshi Iswar Saran (1874-1947); advocate of Allahabad High Court; president, Allahabad Swadeshi League.

not private—for which I have made myself responsible will not permit me to go to Bombay. I am dreadfully sorry but there is no help.

I sincerely hope the labours of the Conference at Bombay will lead to some tangible result. It will be a tremendous pity if we fail at this juncture to accomplish something real.

Wishing you all success and with kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Iswar Saran

45. From Khan Chand Dev¹

Lahore
8.5.1928

Dear Sir,

Sardar Kharak Singh has been feeling much sore for not including the name of Sikhs in the Madras Congress Resolution on Hindu-Muslim Pact. He thinks that the Congress does not give importance to the Sikhs. In spite of our assurance to the contrary he believes that the Congress has been ignoring the Sikhs. Consequently at the Punjab Provincial Conference held at Amritsar the wordings of the resolution "between Hindus and Mohamedans" have been changed into "between all the communities". I believe this does not make any difference as far as the pact is concerned. I, therefore, request you to have this change made in the pact by the Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee at the earliest possible opportunity. An announcement to this effect in the Press shall satisfy Sardar Kharak Singh and his friends. In future too the words "Hindus and Mohamedans" should be replaced by "all communities". This is the strong wish of Sardar Kharak Singh and some of his friends. I hope you would agree with me. These minor changes shall facilitate our work in this province.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
K.C. Dev.

¹He was General Secretary of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee.

46. From Jawaharlal Nehru

Allahabad
9.5.1928

My dear Ansari,

The Bengal P.C.C. inform me that they are sending a number of representatives to the All Parties Conference. On the last occasion we did not ask Provincial Congress Committees to send representatives nor did I take any such action on this occasion. But the Bengal people having taken the initiative it seems to me difficult to ask them to get away. Besides I think it is good that other Congressmen should come. I have, therefore, told them that subject to what you may decide they will be welcome there. I have also asked the other Provincial Committees to send a small number of representatives should they so desire. I hope you approve of this.

Yours affectionately,
Jawaharlal

47. From Mohammad Yaqub

Moradabad
9.5.1928

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am indebted to you for your kind invitation to the Bombay Conference on the 19th instant. The Council of the All-India Muslim League held at Delhi in March last resolved that its representatives should not take part in the formulation of future constitution unless the Delhi scheme of 1927, including the separation of Sind and the introduction of Reforms in the N.W.F.P. and Baluchistan was agreed to, in toto, by the other political organisations in the country, including the Hindu Mahasabha. Unfortunately, the All-Parties Conference held at Delhi in March last, modified the Congress resolution passed at Madras and the All-India Hindu Mahasabha held at Nagpur strongly opposed the separation of Sind.¹ The strength of opposition on

¹A few days after the All-Parties Conference was held, leading Hindu Mahasabha leaders issued a manifesto in which they condemned the 'attempts to constitute new provinces in India with the object of creating a number of provinces in which a particular community is in a majority'.

the part of these important organisations cannot be overlooked and it seems nearly impossible to obtain support of majority organisations to a reasonable plan providing safeguards for all interests. I don't want to shirk issues and am quite willing to face and settle them provided there is any likelihood of coming to an understanding.

Under the present circumstances, I regret very much I am unable to take part in any deliberations regarding the principles of future Constitution. I wish it were possible for you to exert your influence in order to create a more healthy and wholesome atmosphere for the discussion.

Yours sincerely,
 Mohammad Yaqub

48. From Mohammad Ismail Khan¹

Meerut
 10.5.1928

My Dear Doctor Sahib,

I thank you for inviting me to attend the All Parties Conference at Bombay on the 19th of May. I would have gladly done so, but knowing as I do that the invitation has been extended to me because of my having represented the All-India Muslim League at the last conference in Delhi, I feel that it will not be right for me to do so unless I am authorised by the Council of the All-India Muslim League or the President to act as one of its representatives at the forthcoming conference. The resolution by which we were appointed last time does not authorise us to represent it at any subsequent meetings. If you want the Muslim League to be represented at the forthcoming conference, I would suggest your asking the President to summon representation for it.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
 M. Ismail Khan

¹(1883-1959); dewan of Mysore, 1926-41; delegate to the three Round Table Conferences held in London 1930-32; prime minister of Jaipur 1942-46; prime minister of Hyderabad, 1946-47.

49. From R. K. Sidhwa¹

Karachi
11.5.1928

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am in receipt of your wire of the 8th asking me to be present at the All Parties Conference on the 19th. Originally it was announced that we should meet on the 29th and I fixed up my programme accordingly. As the date is now changed I am sorry I shall not be able to attend.

I entirely agree with you that we must face the situation and put up a majority report if differences still exist on account of Sind separation. I am really sorry that the Sir Purshotamdas Committee to frame a report on the Sind issue has not met even once, otherwise we would have proved to the opponents, few of whom who take prominent part for reasons best known to themselves, that they have no case or legs to stand on. Even today if the combined opinion of all the communities in Sind is taken, the majority would be for separation. Let there be a referendum on that issue and the matter could be decided once for all.

You deserve all credit for taking pains to bring about unity and I wish you every success in your efforts.

Yours sincerely,
R.K. Sidhwa

¹A senior Congressman of Sind. He was a member of the Indian Constituent Assembly.

50. From Satyapal¹

Lahore
11.5.1928

My dear Dr. Ansari Sahib,

I am thankful to you for the very kind invitation to attend the All Parties Conference to be held at Bombay on 9th instant. I shall try to

¹He came into prominence during the Rowlatt Act agitation. He was President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee for several years. In 1952, he was elected Speaker of the Punjab Assembly. He died in 1954.

do so though I am not certain whether I shall be able to do so. I very gratefully appreciate your efforts to bring about an understanding among all communities of India. It is a very knotty problem and needs a very patient and careful handling.

The situation in the Punjab is more complicated than in any other province. The Muslims, inspite of being in majority, want reservation of seats. If they get that, then the Sikhs resent such an arrangement because their representation becomes less than what it is even now. The Hindus of this province are keen that there should be no reservation of seats and are blaming the Congress for agreeing to a principle which is not sound and is anti-nationalistic. I appreciate the point that Muslims, inspite of being in majority are afraid of Hindus and hence they are keen on having the number of seats fixed for them. We made efforts to settle this question, but the prospects are not bright. Things are more obscure and complicated than they appear to be.

It is my humble suggestion that a meeting of the Conference should be held at Lahore to influence the Muslim public opinion to find a way out of this difficult impasse. We in the Punjab will try to find a solution though I am not hopeful of the result.

One point more I wish to submit. Sardar Kharak Singh is very much angry by our using 'Hindu-Muslim Pact'. He feels that the Sikhs are being ignored. In our Conference also he was going to create some unpleasantness by walking out and asking the Sikhs to walk out because 'Hindu-Muslim Pact' is being discussed. In a private meeting of ours he again mentioned this point with much warmth and he is actively preaching against this phrase. I shall request you and through you the members of the Working Committee to please in future use the phrase 'settlement of various communities of India'. This will satisfy all the communities and specially the Sikhs. Even some of our Sikh workers feel that Sardar Kharak Singh is not in the right to insist on the phrase 'Hindu-Muslim Pact' being changed but the fact is that Sardar Kharak Singh is a very important personage and cannot be ignored. Hence I have made this request and I am confident you will please accept it.

I thank you once again for your admirably tackling the situation and I pray to God to grant you strength to properly solve this

problem on the correct solution of which depends the brightness of our future.

With respectful regards,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Satyapal

51. From P.R. Jain¹

Calcutta
17.5.1928

Dear Sir,

The following resolution was passed by the Executive Committee of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha at a meeting held on the 16th May at 160 Harrison Road, under the Presidentship of Mahamahopadhyaya Pandit Pramathananth Tarkabhushan :

"This meeting of the Executive Committee of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha endorses the resolution of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha at Jubbulpore, regarding separation of Sind, joint electorate, and reservation of seats and strongly resents the idea of reservation of seats for the majority in any province specially in Bengal. The meeting further repudiates the right of any one excepting the accredited representatives of Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha to speak on behalf of Bengal Hindus on such vital questions of Hindu interest."

Padam Raj Jain

¹Padam Raj Jain was Secretary of the Bengal Provincial Hindu Sabha.

52. From Motilal Nehru

Allahabad
20.7.1928

My dear Ansari,

I am sorry to hear from Jawahar that you are laid up. Hope you are out of the wood now.

The enclosed copy was left out yesterday. It is being sent now. I hope you will agree.

Please let me know how you are doing now.

Yours sincerely,
Motilal Nehru

Enclosure :

Allahabad
. 20.7.1928

To
The Members,
All-Parties Conference Committee

A point of considerable importance has arisen in the course of the preparation of the Committee's report. As the proceedings on that point are not very clear and on their literal construction lead to practical difficulties, I have considered it necessary to refer the matter again to the members.

It will be remembered that the question of reservation of seats for majorities and minorities arose on the Muslim demand for such reservation. The greater part of the discussion centred round the reservation of seats for Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal and the effect it would have on other minority communities in those provinces. That was the sole point discussed at the informal conference with certain leading Hindus and Muslims held on the 6th and 7th July. In the resolution of that Conference which was passed in the afternoon of the 7th the words "all minorities" were inserted after the words "majorities" both in the first and second parts of the resolution without the question of minorities being separately discussed on its own merits. It was on the morning of the 8th when some of the non-members who attended the informal conference had already left that

one of them Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani¹ drew pointed attention to the representation of the Muslim minority in the Central Legislature. The result of the discussions which ensued is thus summarised in the minutes of the proceedings:—

“The question of reservation of seats for the Muslim minority in the Central Legislature was considered. It was stated, however, that under yesterday’s agreement (first part) there could be no such reservation even for minorities. On the other hand it was pointed out that without reservation it was probable that only about 30 or 40 Muslims may be returned to a Central Legislature of 500. The same result would be arrived at, it was shown, in the provinces where Muslims were in a small minority. A suggestion was that this difficulty could be got over by a reservation of seats for small minorities in both Central and Provincial legislatures but not for majorities. This would mean a revision of yesterday’s agreement. No decision was arrived at and the matter was postponed to the evening session.”

It will thus be seen that it was with a view to provide adequate representation for Muslim minorities that the general words “small minorities” were used without any special attention being paid to the case of the non-Muslim minorities.

The note recorded in the minutes of the evening sitting runs thus :

“The question of minority representation left over at the morning session was then taken up. It was unanimously agreed to modify the first part of the resolution of the informal conference held on the 7th July so as to permit reservation of seats in the Central Legislature for minorities on population basis.”

Here again the word “minorities” is used while the discussion which preceded had sole reference to Muslim minorities. It will be noticed that it was not in order for the members and non-members who attended the meeting of the 8th July to “modify” the resolution arrived

¹Tassaduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani (d. 1935); a member of the Bilona branch of the Sherwani Pathan family; one brother, Nisar Ahmad Khan, became a superintendent of post offices, resigning his post in the non-cooperation movement, and another, Fida Ahmad Khan, managed a sugar factory in Etah; educated in Aligarh and at Cambridge where he was a contemporary of Jawaharlal Nehru; a close friend of Ansari and Mohammad Ali and followed them in the Aligarh Muslim University movement and the Home Rule League; member of the UPCC and the AICC 1919; member, Khilafat Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee, 1922; joined Swarajists, January 1923; took part in the civil disobedience movement of 1930; leading member of the Nationalist Muslim Party; president of the UPCC, 1931; member of the Congress Parliamentary Board, 1934. ‘He had a genial personality,’ wrote Khaliquzzaman, ‘and was loved and respected by his friends and foes alike’.

at by the full conference the previous day. But this is only a formal defect as it was open to the committee to adopt that resolution with such alteration as it deemed necessary in the light of further facts coming to its knowledge.

Then follows a note in the minutes which looks like the decision of the Committee on the whole discussion. It is as follows:

"The question of reservation of seats for small minorities in the Provincial Council was then considered. The Committee with the exception of Shuaib Qureshi was of the opinion that the reasons favouring such reservation in the Central Legislature apply with an equal force to the Provincial Legislatures also. This opinion was supported by non-members present. It was, therefore, agreed to report to the All Parties Conference that reservation of seats for small minorities in proportion to their population with the right to contest additional seats should be permitted in the Provincial Legislatures."

Here we find the words used are "small minorities" though the discussion was confined to Muslim minorities. Another point to be noticed is that "small minorities" are not defined and it is impossible to say when a minority ceases to be small and becomes large.

It is evident that our recommendations to the All Parties Conference must be clear and definite. In framing those recommendations my attention was naturally directed to the case of non-Muslim minorities and I found it very difficult to come to any conclusion without a further conference with the members of the Committee. Realising, however, the shortness of time at our disposal and the inconvenience which another journey to Allahabad would entail upon the members I am taking the course of consulting them by correspondence.

The case of the Muslim minorities was well thrashed out and I have no difficulty on that score. To put it briefly it comes to this. The Muslims who form 1/4 of the population of British India will not by reason of their uneven distribution in the various provinces be able to return more than 30 or 40 members from the Punjab and Bengal to the Central Legislature of 500 members. In the provinces the proportion of their population is so small that they stand the risk of being unable to elect a single member. Even if they succeed in electing a few it will be impossible for them to secure their representation in the Central Legislature anywhere near 25% of the full strength of the House which on their population they are entitled to claim. Coming to the provincial legislatures their position will be much the same as has been pointed out in the minutes of the proceedings.

There is no analogy between the Muslim and non-Muslim minorities in India. The latter are nowhere when the total population of

India is considered. Leaving out the case of Buddhists who are to be found chiefly in Burma the percentage of the population of other non-Muslim minorities to the population of India is as follows:

Christians	1.2%
Sikhs	1%
Jains	0.2%
Others (besides tribal religions in hill tracts)	0.2%

It will thus appear that so far as the Central Legislature is concerned the reservation of seats for non-Muslim minorities on a population basis will hardly help them to any appreciable extent. As regards the provincial legislatures the only minority concentrated in a single province is that of the Sikhs in the Punjab who form 11% of the population of that province. But the Sikhs have never asked for reservation of seats in the Punjab if no reservation is allowed to any other community in that province.

It will thus appear that there is no occasion to reserve seats for non-Muslim minorities either in the central or provincial legislatures. Any attempt to do so will only cause confusion and will in my opinion be a very doubtful advantage to the communities concerned.

I have not mentioned the Hindu minorities in the Punjab and Bengal as by no stretch of the imagination 35 and 45 per cent of the population can be regarded as a small minority.

It may however be said that the case of Muslim minorities in the provinces does not differ very much from that of the other non-Muslim minorities. In fact, Muslims in U.P. they being about 15 per cent of the population are more numerous than Sikhs in the Punjab. But as I have already said it is not the case of the Sikhs that they should have reservation in the Punjab apart from the other communities. But the Muslim problem is an all-India problem and has to be viewed in that aspect. My suggestion, therefore, is that we should confine our recommendation to Muslim minorities both in the central and the provincial legislatures. It is not necessary to use the expression "small minorities" as they are nowhere anything but small. The only other alternative is to have no reservation for any minorities in the provinces, including Muslims. But this will cause considerable dissatisfaction to Muslims without conferring any special benefit on non-Muslims. It must be remembered that besides reservation by means of communal electorates the Muslims at present enjoy considerable weightage in every province. We are offering them the right to contest for additional seats in lieu of this weightage and we cannot very well

do away with reservation in their case. I see no hardship in this to non-Muslim majorities or minorities. Endless complications will arise if we recommended reservation for all minorities. Besides the existing well-defined minorities such as Christians, Parsis, Jews, fresh groups from among the Hindu castes and sub-castes will claim the right and it will be a perpetual source of trouble.

The communal question is essentially a Hindu-Muslim question and must be settled on that basis. We shall indeed be doing poor service if in our attempt to settle it we let it loose on the country to swallow up communities and sub-communities most of whom have not even dreamt of it.

It may at first sight seem invidious to make a concession to one minority community and withhold it from others. But as I have already pointed out the Muslim minorities stand on a very different footing from others. The question we have to ask ourselves is "are we doing any injustice to the other minorities"? I hope I have shown above that we are not.

Our whole aim is to arrive at a solution which would be acceptable not only to the All Parties Conference but to the country at large. We have already arrived at a common understanding to do away with separate electorates, and reservation of seats for Muslim majorities and weightages for other minorities, the three greatest obstacles in the way of our political advancement. We would not risk this great achievement by taking a narrow view on the question of Muslim minorities in the provincial councils.

As we cannot have the opportunity of discussing this important question across the table I have dealt with it more fully than was perhaps necessary. I hope you will agree with me after considering it very carefully and let me hear from you by wire or post as soon as possible. The report is practically ready and the draft copy will be sent to you as soon as your reply is received.

50. From Ram Prasad and Deshbandhu Gupta¹

Delhi
6.12.1928

Dear Sir,

In response to the wishes of Muslims it may be necessary for you soon to be called upon to reconsider the Nehru Report. The

¹Members of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha.

compromise so far as we know was arrived at on the express understanding that the maximum had been conceded to the Muslims and that no further demands would be made on their behalf. But a certain section among Muslims does not apparently seem content with what Muslims have got. The leaders of this section are pressing for the immediate separation of Sindh irrespective of any financial or other considerations, thus almost completely abrogating the terms of agreement arrived at by the Hindus under the pressure of the late lamented Lala Lajpat Rai² and much against their wishes. They further want one-third representation in the Central Legislature and reservation of seats probably according to their population strength in Bengal and the Punjab—concessions which were considered unreasonable and extravagant even by the authors of the Nehru Report. For the Hindus to concede all this with undermining their own safety and permanently imperilling the political progress of the country is well-nigh impossible. There should be some limit to the sacrifice of the Hindus, and you will agree the limit was reached at the All-Parties Conference, Lucknow.

Late Lalā Lajpat Rai is gone. We are sure he will be very much missed by all during the deliberations of the forthcoming Convention. His absence has made our responsibility still greater and duty more difficult. Though Lalaji's voice has been silenced he has however left his message behind for our guidance. If we had a niche in our heart for him, if we really valued his counsel, it is our duty to read this message which he delivered only a few days before his martyrdom and be guided by it. We pray to God this may inspire us to be strong, just and true to ourselves, our community and our country. Let us remember Lalaji is still watching us and our activities from

²1865-1928; educated at the Lahore College, 1890; passed the Law examination in 1886; practised first at Hissar and later at Lahore; joined the Congress in 1888; seconded a resolution on the boycott of British cloth at the Banaras Congress in December 1905; deported to Burma in 1907; went to England in 1908 and delivered lectures on Indian politics; established the Indian Home Rule League in the United States on 15 October 1916; arrested in 1921; President of the Special Congress session, Calcutta, September 1920, and opposed Gandhi's non-cooperation resolution; supported non-cooperation at Nagpur, December 1920; founded an Urdu daily, *Bande Mataram*, and an English weekly, the *People*; president of the Agra Provincial Hindu Conference, Etawah, 27 October 1928, where he supported the Nehru Report; closely associated with the Hindu Mahasabha, and the *shuddhi* and *sangathan* movements,

heaven and the manner in which we discharge the trust bequeathed by him to us and his other fellow countrymen.

We are,
Yours sincerely,
Ram Pershad
Deshbandhu Gupta

54. To Shaukat Ali

14.5.1929

My dear Shaukat bhai,

Before I say anything about the subject matter of your letter of 10th April, I must ask your forgiveness for not answering your letter earlier. I have been away such a great deal that it has not been possible for me to sit down and dictate a letter to you until just now. I am very sorry to have missed you during your visit to Delhi last week, specially I wanted to talk to you, both about the subject matter of your letter as well as about other important matters. I got your message when I returned home only five minutes before your train was due to start. It was, therefore, impossible for me even to try and meet you at the Railway station. However, I hope to see you in Bombay where I shall be coming on the 23rd to attend the meeting of the Congress Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee.

Regarding my contribution to Omar Memorial Gate, I had promised you, you would remember, five hundred rupees towards the fund, but I had also asked you to let me pay it in my own time, as I was much pressed to pay up liabilities to the extent of Rs. 25,000, incurred in connection with the construction of my new house.

Since I have been relieved of the duties of Congress Presidentship, I have been overwhelmed by unfortunate circumstances. I was down with influenza for three weeks on my return from Calcutta, and, again, for two weeks in February. This had weakened my constitution considerably, and specially my old dilated heart was giving me a great trouble. But, it was not only physical but also mental sickness which I suffered from.

After seeing how partisan spirit had utterly blinded you and how under its influence you had acted unfairly, unjustly, and in a manner

I could never have dreamt you capable of acting, my faith in your righteousness and fair play completely broke down. When further, I was obliged to see that you were not prepared to do justice even to uphold the good name of the C.K.C. by an unequivocal condemnation of acts of violence resorted to in the meeting of the C.K.C., I tell you, I received one of the greatest shocks of my life. I had been a loyal co-worker of yours for the last 18 years, who had idolised you, worshipped the very ground on which you trod, had given you such friendship, love and loyalty, which, I venture to say, no other person amongst your fellow-workers had given you. I had placed myself, and all that I had, ungrudgingly at your service but when I saw the clay feet of my idol I felt as if the world had turned topsy-turvy and that I could never, in future, trust any one whoever it might be. I suffered from mental nausea from which I have not quite got over and which I do not think I would ever be able to completely shake off. Such a complete mental change has come over me that I do not think I shall ever be the same man that I was before.

In fairness to you, I must say that so far as the incident in Calcutta relating to my person was concerned, you have completely cleared your position. But the condoning of the atrocious deed of violence committed under your very nose, with the meeting of the C.K.C., would rankle in my heart and would lower you in my estimation. You are certainly as much entitled to have your political views on the current question as I, or any other person, and you are perfectly justified in trying to convert people to your views, but these things should be done in a proper manner without maligning your opponents, without impugning their bona fides and attacking their character, and without resorting to violence. There was as much difference of opinion between the late Hakim Ajmal Khan¹ and myself regarding the question of Council entry, as there exists today between you and

¹1863-1928; family came from Kashgar, Turkestan, and held important positions under the Mughal Emperor, Babur; produced a long line of physicians of which the most famous was Hakim Sharif Khan, Ajmal's grandfather; educated in all the Islamic branches of learning and studied medicine from his father, Haji Mahmud Khan, and his brother; founder member of the Muslim League, 1906; chairman of the Reception Committee of the Muslim League, 1910; president, Muslim League, 1919; took part in the Khilafat movement, and was the first to renounce his title in April 1920; appointed Chairman of the Jamia Millia Islamia, November 1920; president, Indian National Congress and All-India Khilafat Conference, Ahmedabad, December 1921; member, Congress Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee and voted in favour of Council entry; joined the Swarajists, January 1923; retired from politics in 1923 because of ill-health.

me, and yet there was never an angry word between him and me. Nor was there the slightest estrangement or straining of social relations between us. On my part, I can say with an easy conscience that I have never said or done anything against you or your brother which was in any way detrimental or derogatory to you in private or public capacity. But, I cannot say the same thing about you. I am afraid therefore, that although we may meet (and believe me, I shall always give you the courteous treatment I have done before) but I can never again be the same to you as I have been before. It is a very sad reflection, but, alas, it is only too true that I have found you quite different from what I had thought of you. At our age, new friendship and new attachments are difficult, if not impossible, to make therefore, life in future would be the less fuller, the less richer for want of such friends as you and I have been. I, however, bow to the inexorable march of events and have fortified myself against whatever the future may have in store, and have prepared myself to go on working in the service of my faith and my country, in the best manner that I can do.

You must have learnt from Said, what a determined fight I made for you and how I was able to bring them all round to your point of view. I am writing this not to crow over any little help I might have rendered you, but only by way of information. You will never find me doing any thing detrimental to your personal interest nor anything which was petty and mean, even though we might be sworn political adversaries today. I have hopes that you would do the same. I should, certainly, have great confidence regarding your public activities also, if you had the courage and the large-mindedness to repudiate the demeaning exhibition of violence at Calcutta.

Now, to come back to my promise regarding the Omar Memorial Gate, I had certainly made the promise to contribute Rs. 500/- towards it, but at a time when I was less harassed about my own liabilities. Also since then the happenings in the C.K.C. have compelled me associating myself in a public denunciation of the shameful performance at the meeting of the C.K.C. held in Calcutta. And nothing has happened since December last to change my views. On the contrary, your continued silence and your ignoring of the advice given by me and Tasadduq at Delhi regarding the matter, shows that you have at least condoned the offence, if not actively supported it. How can I, in such circumstances, be expected to subscribe towards the construction of a part of the permanent building of the C.K.C. which, today I am constrained to consider an instrument not of good, as I used to think? I am keen to commemorate the memory of a

dear departed friend, but the association of the memorial with the C.K.C., as it stands today, precludes me unfortunately from doing so.

I hope my brutally frank talk, would not be misunderstood by you. I owe it to you, to myself, to the great faith which we both follow and to the country which has given birth to us, to do nothing less but to speak out frankly.

Your disillusioned friend,
Ansari

55. From Shaukat Ali

Bombay
19.5.1929

My dear Doctor,

Thanks for your letter of the 14th May which I got on the 17th. It is far better to know what one's friends really think of him than to live in an atmosphere of unreality; even the bitter and brutal truth is better. This knowledge would act as a mental and brain purge and would knock out all the conceit, if one was in the habit of putting on airs. Your frank letter—brutally frank as you yourself call it—may have roused even a phlegmatic easy-going man to indulge in equal frankness if not “brutal frankness” but I have not lost sense of proportion and thank God have not allowed any bitterness to creep in and corrode my heart—good, bad or indifferent as it may have been. Further I am not a “disillusioned friend”. I had never formed a wrong opinion or estimate of you. I knew you as you were, and to this day I feel that I had not been wrong in my judgement. You are a Doctor and so have dissected and analysed cruelly my character inside out and I do hope and pray you have *again judged me wrongly*. As a weak human being, I might have been roused and tempted to retaliate but I cannot do so. All the kindness that I had received from you and yours for myself and for mine would not allow me, even if I was carried away by passion, anger or disappointment. I leave this matter here as I have no desire to make the present position worse. It was your good nature that had put me on such a high pedestal and had blinded you to my faults. I had always

the human "feet of clay" and you were hopelessly wrong to make me a tin-god and worship me as an "idol". You will in fairness admit that I had never posed as a sacred being or even as a super-man and so cannot be blamed if friends took me to be a better man than I really was. I have always been a soldier of Islam and India and God-willing would always remain that. I have openly proclaimed

that I am not a **فاسق و فاجر** but an ordinary **صاحب تقویٰ**

Yet I have had my views and convictions and have always paid cheerfully any prices asked for holding them. Today I sorrowfully, but I think bravely, give up a dear friend for them. You know I am a Muslim widow's son and early in life had learnt to stand on my own legs and carve out a destiny for myself. Even my worst enemies could not say that I ever was what they call a "charlatan". You were hopelessly wrong to put me on a high pedestal and are quite justified to hurl me down when it pleases you.

Yes : You are quite right when you say that our relations cannot remain the same. You have got a "dilated" heart and I also have a heart—rather a big heart. It also feels pain and is liable to be broken though, thank God, it is not very brittle. I have refused to keep the account of wrongs done to me and it is late to begin now.

دل ہی تو ہے نہ سنگ و خشت درد سے بھرنے آئے کیوں
روئیں گے ہم ہزار بار کوئی ہمیں ستائے کیوں

As for the contribution for the **بابِ عمر** I am sorry for your

decision. The Khilafat House is complete and the Memorial to a dear departed friend and brother is also established. Your promised Rs. 500 is not a big sum and I can certainly do without it. It only means a little more trouble to my old and tired limbs to beg that much. I thank God that He gave me courage to make a right decision about myself and my family. Kind friends had been helping me, so that I could be free from the worry of doing something for my living and thus be able to devote all my time to the work entrusted to me. It was very good and kind of them and I cannot sufficiently thank them. This is

not a **رسمی** thanks. And as for you, I can never be out of your debt for what you did for me and mine. In our own humble way I and mine were devoted to you and did our best for you. It was not altogether a one-sided affair. I will not in future ask or accept from any friend help for myself. It has a demoralizing influence especially on the growing family. I may have been an idol worshipped as such by some friends, but I do not want my children to become 'Peerzadas'. This would help the public cause, as I would now be begging entirely for the cause. God is great and He will give us other helpers if He had ordained that we may do something for our great faith. I find my conscience clear and so feel sorry for your decision.

توبہ ملک و جاہ سکندری من رسم و راہ قلندری
اگر آن خوش است توبہ خوری اگر این بد است مرا بر

As for the Calcutta incident, I regret you are making a mountain out of a mole-hill. A trivial matter for which no one but your supporters and your party were responsible, is being made a big grievance. Public workers ought to be more thick-skinned. I did not want to hurt your feelings and so never put before you our side of the case. You and your party alone were responsible for all the mischief and trouble. It is we who ought to expect reparation from your side. You must share the blame if the party you lead misbehaves. Everything was done to break and weaken the Khilafat both from outside and inside. It would have been proper and correct to leave it if you found it was needed no more. Bogus Khilafat Committees which never existed and never functioned were set up against our movement, so that

Motilal Nehru and his report may get **فرضی** support from the

Muslim Community. Your Punjab friends abused it in the Press, in the public and came inside only to create mischief and abuse us and other workers. When they failed, they abused our President in the open meeting and Begum Mohammad Ali also. You know it yourself as you spoke to them strongly against it but that only proves that they did it. When they abused the Peshawaris calling them "Goonda" and other very ugly names, they got from them what they deserved and if it was not for us and our influence, they would have received

a treatment which they fully deserved and more. You were also unfortunately pushed in the melee and hurt; and in the excitement of the fray they could make no distinction between members of a party. Such a trivial incident should have been forgotten and not even mentioned but unfortunately recent events have made you so very sensitive and touchy, where you and your party are concerned, that you absolutely ignore the other side. After that you went and abused us in the Press and started a rival show and did your utmost to blacken us before our people. I know the present Hindu mentality well. They do not want our friendship; they want our allegiance and God-willing, they will never get that. For any honourable peace and pact we are always ready but not for the slavery of the Hindus; just as we do not want to remain slaves of the English. Our President, your erstwhile friend, Maulana Mohammad Ali, whatsoever his faults (and who has no faults?) certainly has a position in the country and has served it nobly; and he is right when he says that it is you and your side that must apologise to the Central Khilafat Committee for all that you all have done to discredit it. I have borne and will in future also bear many an indignity and insult to my own person but where the great Khilafat movement is concerned, I proclaim that its position and work has been such that only a passion-blind Muslim can run it down. Today it stands against the blind and foolish fury of the united Hindu community and has also to face the abuse of some of its own former workers. All those who stand by it and believe in it, have a right to defend it and we will do so with our lives. It is no good to exasperate us. Our record is there now, and the future will show how we serve Islam and the motherland. Today we are disorganized but tomorrow we will not remain so and time will show soon that Muslims are not a dead and inert people, as our opponents make out. In your blind adherence to Motilal Nehru and other Hindus, you betrayed Muslims and your friends and co-workers and we both are free now to take our lines of action. Non-cooperation was ruined by these people, chances for Hindu-Muslim friendship have been throttled, an understanding between princes and people thwarted, Swaraj Party dismembered and now you yourself see what is being done to kill the Congress, which has ceased to be National now. It has become an adjunct of the Hindu Mahasabha and will soon be a seeker of favours at the door of the English. The Muslims trust in God and would stand on their own legs. We have done our best to unite Muslims but your group does not want it. On the 3rd March they were of one mind but after the Assembly debate, they obeyed "their master's voice" and took a very different line altogether on the 29th and 30th March.

جب غیر کے تم دم ساز ہوئے ہم اور کے محونا ز ہوئے
تھاروز کا جھگڑا خوب ہوا تم سے چھٹے ہم تم؛

I hope this finds you in better health. We feel fearfully the terrible news of Hameeda's illness. She was certainly worse when I saw her last. May God help her and her poor parents, who had enough worries already.

Could you kindly ask Khan Sahib¹ to send me a copy of my letter of the 10th April to which you sent me this reply as early as he can. I would like to read it again.

With prayers for your health and love to our sister and Zohra.²

I remain,
Your discredited friend,
Shaukat Ali

¹Secretary of Dr. Ansari.

²Daughter of Dr. Ansari and married to Shaukatullah Ansari.

56. From Osman Sobani¹

Bombay
4.7.1929

My dear Doctor Saheb,

Last week I read reports of your speeches delivered at Lahore and Delhi in which you blame Muslims for rejecting the 'Nehru Report' in toto, and advise them to suggest such amendments and alterations as will satisfy them. Hindus and Muslims are drifting further and further away, the split in the ranks of Muslim Nationalists is deplorable, and the thought of Shaukat associating with Muslim job-hunters is unbearable. I am therefore writing this to enquire if during the last

¹B 1895; was owner of several textile mills in Bombay. From 1922-25, he was the Hony. Secretary of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee. In 1930, he was President of the Bombay PCC and was sentenced to 10 months' imprisonment for satyagraha.

seven months you have found any change in the mentality of Hindu Nationalists. After their treatment to Jinnah and others at Calcutta do you feel that the Muslim point of view will be appreciated? Do you think that Hindu Nationalists are prepared to reopen the doors of their minds and sit down at a round table with Muslim Nationalists and discuss the situation afresh? I spoke to Shaukat the other day and I feel that he will be quite willing to discuss the possibility of an *entente cordiale*.

Thanks to you. I am feeling very much better; I have stopped the Bromide mixture and am now taking only the tablets.

With affectionate regards,

Yours,
Osman

57. Circular

Delhi
17.7.1929

I heartily endorse Mr. Rafi Ahmad Kidwai's¹ appeal to Nationalist Muslims to attend the Allahabad meeting on the 27th. Although, the idea of the party² was mooted in April last, nothing has so far been done to put it on a regular basis and draw up a programme of

¹1894-1954; a distinguished Congressman from Barabanki; minister for Revenue, Home and Jails in U.P. in 1937-39 and 1946-47; minister in the Government of India from 1947 till his death.

²The Nationalist Muslim Party was founded on the 27th July, 1929, with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in the chair. The objects of the party were:

- (a) to promote among the Muslims of India the spirit of nationalism; to develop a mentality above communalism and to inspire into them a greater confidence in Indian national ideals.
- (b) to induce the Muslims to take their proper share in national struggle, and
- (c) to create such relations between majority and minority communities as would lead the former to consider the rights of minorities in a spirit of broad-minded patriotism and the latter in that of true nationalism.

Among the prominent members of the Nationalist Muslim Party were Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Raja of Mahmudabad, Ali Imam, Saifuddin Kitchlew, Syed Mahmud, Khaliquzzaman, and Tasadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani.

work. Individuals have, undoubtedly, been working in the spirit of the Party, but organised and concerted action by Muslims as a body has been lacking. The community must be made to participate effectively in the common struggle for freedom. This is all the more urgent now because within a few months, India will have to take decisions affecting the whole future of the country. Let it not be said that Muslims with their great Islamic traditions of freedom and chivalry failed their Motherland at a critical and turning point in its history. I, therefore, earnestly appeal to every patriotic Muslim to do his bit in creating the spirit of National duty among Indian Muslims with the immediate object for which the Party is being launched.

M.A. Ansari

58. From Mujibur Rahman¹

Calcutta
21.7.1929

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am in receipt of your letter asking me to attend the meeting of the Muslim Nationalist Party at Allahabad. I am thinking of attending that meeting as well as the meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and I hope to go to Allahabad with other friends.

I am afraid we nationalist Muslims have been doing nothing to further the cause which we stand for. You remember Dr. Kitchlew² was to call a meeting of the Council of the Muslim League at Patna in May last. He did nothing of the kind. He did not even reply to letters written to him in that connexion. Moreover, our Nationalist

¹Maulvi Mujibur Rahman, a leading Congressman from Calcutta; editor of the *Mussalman*; one of the founders of the Muslim Nationalist Party.

²Saifuddin Kitchlew (1884-1963); educated in India, England and Germany; started legal practice at Rawalpindi, 1913; moved to Amritsar, 1915, where he took a prominent part in the Rowlatt Satyagraha; sentenced to life imprisonment but was released under Amnesty, December 1919; took a leading part in the Khilafat and Non-cooperation movements, and gave up practice, 1920; member, Non-cooperation Committee of the Central Khilafat Committee, 1920-1; interned for supporting the Karachi resolutions, 1921-3; conducted the *tanzim* campaign, 1924-27; supported the Nehru Report, 1928.

Party was formed at your house when we met at Delhi for the Muslim League session and we have been sleeping over the matter for so many months. We have been carrying on no propaganda to popularise our views. In Bengal the situation is, I think, worse than that of any other province. We have been trying to do something here through the few nationalist newspapers we have but that is very little. A rigorous propaganda is necessary. We must take concerted action throughout the country.

Yours sincerely,
Mujibur Rahman

59. From Mazharul Haque

22.7.1929

My dear Ansari,

Yours of the 17th instant received only this morning. I have not received any invitation from Mr. Kidwai or any one else to join the Nationalist Party at Allahabad. You know that at present I do not belong to any party of Muslims, be it Nationalist or Unnationalist. As a matter of fact I am so thoroughly disgusted with the present condition of Indian politics that I think it better to keep myself aloof and quiet.

However as you have insisted me, I would have most certainly gone to Allahabad, had I known where to go to. You know that I am no longer young and cannot trudge about as I used to and moreover I want to be taken care of.

Affectionately yours,
M. Haque

60. From Mujibur Rahman

Calcutta
1.8.1929

My dear Dr. Ansari,

May I remind you of what Maulana Abul Kalam Azad said the other day at the meeting of the Nationalist Muslims at Allahabad in connexion with *The Mussalman*. I may tell you that *The Mussalman* was started as a weekly in 1906. In 1923, the concern was turned into a limited liability company. In 1925, a thrice-a-week edition of the paper was brought out and in 1926 a vernacular (Bengali) weekly paper called *Khadem* was started by the company. These, as you may understand, are all Nationalist papers. Now it is contemplated to turn the thrice-a-week edition of *The Mussalman* into a daily, and for this at least Rs. 50,000 is required, besides the money (about Rs. 22,000) that has already been received by the sale of shares of the company and which has already been spent in the purchase of a printing machine and printing materials and in carrying on the business. I expect to raise the money from Bengal but at the same time I hope that the nationalist friends of the concern, belonging to other provinces, will render us some assistance in the matter.

I send you in a separate cover a few copies of the prospectus of the company and some application forms. If you kindly exert a little for the sake of the only nationalist paper in English you will, I hope, be able to render it some assistance. We would raise the money mainly from the Muslims. In Calcutta, however, several Hindu friends have each subscribed for 50 shares (of Rs. 10) or thereabout. May I suggest to you to begin the work by yourself subscribing for a number of shares!

Please bear in mind that shares are now to be fully paid up though, according to the prospectus, payments may be made by instalments.

Hoping to hear from you at an early date.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Mujibur Rahman

61. From M.N. Chatterji

Calcutta
12.8.1929

Dear Dr. Ansari,

In the Badshai capital of India you are an ornament of humanitarian and patriotic service rendered for the cause of the oppressed suffering. Your historic national service in the memorable convention shall be treasured by every soul with pride and honour in spite of our acute political differences.

As the President of the Indian National Congress you shouldered the national burden with broad magnanimous political outlook free from all communal bias and communal hatred.

You have encountered mischievous opposition in your national work barricaded by hot communalists to strengthen the communal hatred and communal war in this downtrodden country of ours.

It is a matter of sincere congratulations to find you fighting single-handed in favour of Nehru Constitution, an anti-Islamic constitution, sprung up from Hewett Road in the Palace of Pandit Motilal, the democratic national leader, to wrest political rights from the Imperial Government of Great Britain.

My only regret is that you are carried away by the national sentiment and passionate national feeling in the framing of an Indian constitution, overlooking the claims of Muslim minority. Slavish submission to Hindu domination is not the symbol of patriotism as it has been manifested deeply in the Nehru constitution that you have not impartially acted with your shrewd political judgement in the framing of national charter. Hindu brain behind has led you to misconceived conclusion of national verdict detrimental to Muslim interest and the greater interest of our wondrous land.

Nehru constitution is a diplomatic national pact manufactured by nationalists to hide and cover the communal utterance and communal exhibition of political ideals of Muslims and Hindus.

British cabinet is quite intelligent to understand our acute differences and life-long inimical feeling of Muslims and Hindus since the downfall of Hindu Raj and Badshai rule.

In the holy city of Mecca in the heart of Asia true devotees of Muhammad, our Prophet, have proclaimed in solemn voice that they are born to defend Islam more than their precious human lives. As an Indian Muslim, I shall respectfully beseech you to explain to me

whether you support the recent political move of Moonje¹ Party in the matter of *shuddhi*. My humble self, though a wretched soul belonging to every religion, shall always defend the Muslims against Hindu aggression of *Shuddhism*=a new political weapon invented by Dr. Moonjes' party to increase Hindu population. I condemn Khwaja Hasan Nizami² for his *tabligh* movement as an antidote of *shuddhi*. You remember well how Abdur Rashid, a rigid Muslim, went to the gallows smilingly after butchering Swami Shraddhanand³ in the capital of India not to demonstrate hatred against Hinduism but his fanatical Islamic sentiment led him to this mad uncivilised barbarity as a happy consolation of his burning soul deeply burnt down with the vicious thought of *shuddhism* proclaimed by Arya Samaj leaders to rouse Muslim passionate anger and fanatical barbarous exhibition of thought and action. Rashid has paid ample penalty for his historic savagery. Rational Indians condemn Rashid *mian*. Mahatma Gandhi, the Sabarmati *Fakir*, has done invaluable service to Muslims and Hindus by his hasty certification of Nehru Constitution treated with scant courtesy by prominent Muslim Congressmen in India who have rightly challenged Mahatmajee's autocratic extraordinary political advice befitting an American Senator whose word is presumed to be the law of this fallen country. Mahatmajee's action is more condemnable than Napoleon Bonaparte of French repute. In this fallen country of ours, Mahatmajee's wonderful power of conception and superhuman Divine gifted intelligence turned their course more for the

¹Balkrishna Sheoram Moonje (1872-1948); educated in Hislap College, Nagpur, and Grant Medical College, Bombay, 1894-98; started practice as an eye specialist in Nagpur, 1901; attended the Congress session in 1904, and helped to organise the Central Provinces' Provincial Conference in 1905; joined the 'extremists' after the split in Congress at Surat, 1907; took a leading part in the Home Rule League organised by Tilak; member of the Swaraj Party, the Responsive Co-operation Party and the Hindu Mahasabha; president of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, Patna, 16 April 1927; founder of the militant *sangathan* movement, and was accused by Muslims of fomenting communal trouble in the country; bitterly opposed to the Delhi proposals and to any negotiations with Jinnah after the All-Parties National Convention, December 1928.

²1876-1955; a well known *alim* of Delhi who wrote extensively on literature and religion. He was a patron of the *tabligh* and *tanzim* movements.

³1856-1926; educated at Queen's College, Varanasi, and University College, Lahore; started legal practice at Jullundur in 1885; took an active interest in the Arya Samaj and emerged as the leader of its Gurukul section in 1893; organised the Rowlatt Satyagraha in Delhi, and was invited by the Muslims to address them in the Juma Masjid; chairman of the Reception Committee of Congress, Amritsar, December 1919; launched the *shuddhi* movement towards the end of 1922 and reconverted many Malkana Rajputs to Hinduism; killed by a Muslim fanatic, Abdur Rashid.

defence of Hindu glory and Hindu traditional domination to Muslim minority than fair impartial proclamation of Islamic preservation of rights and liberties as a happy monumental memorial of Emperor Akbar's Divine nature love for Hindus and *vice-versa*.

It has pained my drowning soul that has already sought God's shelter to find Ali Brothers outside the national boundary when Mahatmajee still breathes in his mortal nostril.

The day of happy reconciliation shall come in no distant date when the Ali Brothers with *Quran* in their hands shall embrace Mahatmajee to dethrone communalism from the Indian shore.

The fate of Indian Muslims hangs with the Ali Brothers who are sincere God-fearing defenders of Islam and our Motherland. Whatever may be the intelligent opinion of Congressmen all over India, I proclaim like God's innocent child that by dethroning the Ali Brothers from the Congress, the Nehru party shall suffer irreparable popular suffering and popular control in patriotic deeds and actions.

I know how my loving brother, Mr. Husain Shaheed Suhrawardy,¹ suffered unpardonable humiliations in the hands of Hindu patriots as a prize for his service to the Motherland. Hindu domination and Hindu dictatorship are not the crowning gems of true nationalism. Pandit Motilal, our distinguished patriotic countryman, whose sacrifice and devotional patriotism excite admiration from every soul has committed the gravest political blunder by framing an Indian Constitution without seeking the united will of Hindus and Muslims. Pandit Motilal sought the help of Sabarmati *Fakir* as a happy solution of national problem which has resulted in a disastrous result and Mahatmajee's certification of Nehru Constitution has given a rude shock to all lovers of democracy who never like veiled patriotism submerging the Divine treasured religion of different followers of Divine faith that inhabit India. Hundreds of Mahatmajee's may appear in Bharat *Bhumi*, the cradle of world embracing religion, but none shall have the power to curtail Divine power and Divine justice with all the political clamourings.

I love Mahatmajee more than my life but I sincerely oppose Mahatmajee when he consciously or unconsciously violates God's commandment under the earthly influence of riches and gold of which he tries his level best to distribute for the welfare of the poor.

¹1893-1963; son of Sir Zahid Suhrawardy, Judge of the Calcutta High Court; educated at St. Xavier's College, Calcutta, and Oxford University; member, Bengal Legislative Council, 1921, and was Deputy-Mayor of Calcutta for three successive years; minister, Bengal government, 1927-43; chief minister of Bengal, 1946, and much involved in fanning communal passions.

All his admirers are blood-sucking capitalists and his national lieutenants are owners of palaces and Rolls Royces. Mahatmajee no doubt loves the poor but his love for the poor is greatly handicapped due to his watchful guidance for hot-headed richful aristocrats who dance in worldly merriments at the expense and sacrifice of killing millions of starving wretched naked poor of this country. All India is watching with keen interest your movement and the happy movement of Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, the energetic nationalist Muslim, who is also ungreedingly playing the role of a true nationalist encountering all deadly fanatical opposition befitting a true Asiatic Muslim to develop Indian nationalism on the broad road of democracy without suppressing the communal temperaments of rigid defenders of Islam and Hinduism that have covered the Divine intellectual mentality of millions of Muslims and Non-Muslims of this land. It is very painful that he has also travelled in the same boat with you to support Nehru Constitution and Islam destructive dominating constitution which shall automatically jeopardise Islam and perpetuate Hindu predominance and Hindu dominating influence all over Bharat.

God has given me no earthly power to speak and propagate the merits and demerits of Nehru Constitution, an Islamic breaking constitution and I wrote to Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtoolla¹ in the most emphatic terms to prepare a Muslim constitution independent of Nehru Constitution and Moonje Mahasabha charter which are deliberately chartered to dethrone Islamic influence from Bharat. I appeal to you in the name of Providence not to gamble with the lives of Islamic masses with those national gamblers who are piloting the national ship in a most terrific weather which may bring titanic national disaster in the future national constitution of India. I have sent my humble message to Mr. Jamil Khan, the patriotic son of life-long humanitarian patriot, departed Hakim Ajmal Khan, whose irreparable loss every Indian is feeling today in our national crisis.

I have no printed photos of mine published in renowned newspapers nor I drive in Saloon-bodied Renaults to beat the drums of terrestrial glory, my abode is in *Kabaristan* where moral structures of Muslims, Hindus and Christians are eternally buried demonstrating the shadowing influence of vain illusory world full of Babylonian pleasures and merriments, hypocrisy and trickery with no real lasting substance.

¹Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtoolla (b. 1895); leading merchant of Bombay; member, Bombay Municipal Corporation, 1919-1930; secretary and promoter of the All-India Muslim Conference; secretary, All-India Minorities Conference, which formulated, as were known, Muslim demands, which were subsequently embodied in the Communal Award.

I pray Divine for your glorious record of sincere deep-seated patriotic life in spite of my serious differences with your ideals.

I remain,
A fallen child,
Movindra Nath Chatterji

62. To A.M. Khwaja*

Delhi
16.8.1929

My dear Khwaja,

I was hoping that you would come and have tea with me as I wished to have a long talk with you about the Jamia Millia. You know that last year's deputation to Madras has really been the turning-point in the life history of our beloved institution. If I had not succeeded in collecting the funds there, I am sure, we would have had to close down the Jamia. However, I am happy to say the situation is quite different now. We have been able to save about Rs. 35,000 out of which we are about to purchase 100 *bighas* of land in New Delhi, on the road to Qutab. The remaining Rs. 25,000 we are intending to invest in constructing the main building for the lecture rooms etc. I have made a great deal of preparation in Burma through my old friend, Mirza Rafi, the President of the Rangoon Corporation, and a very influential Indo-Persian merchant of Rangoon.

Mr. Tyabji, old Tyabji's son, and Dr. Shah had, also, considerably helped in the matter. Everything was ready for a big collection for Jamia. I intended going there (Bombay) in March, as Chairman of the Enquiry Committee connected with the All-India Convention. After that work was over, I was to have stayed there for a fortnight in order to collect money for Jamia. Our Muslim and Hindu friends had both calculated that no less than a lac and a half would be received for Jamia. But fates were against us. Maulana Mohammad Ali with his irritable temper and violent tongue, alienated everyone there and the situation became so bad that poor Zakir¹, had to come back and postpone our visit there for the next year.

*Courtesy: Professor Jamal Khwaja.

¹Zakir Husain (1897-1969); one of the founders of Jamia Millia Islamia; appointed *Sheikhul Jamia* (Vice-Chancellor) of the institution in March 1926 after completing his doctorate at the University of Berlin, Germany; appointed Vice-Chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University in November 1948; Governor of Bihar, 1957-62; elected President of India on 9 May 1967.

But, now, I have made all preparations to visit Bhopal and Hyderabad during the last three weeks of September. Last year I had seen Maharaja Kishan Parshad, and year-before-last, Nawab Salar Jung. I have now sent letters to them as well as to all my personal friends in Hyderabad as well as Bhopal. Dr. Zakir and I, intend reaching Bhopal, on the 8th September, at 12 mid-day, and after a few days stay there, proceeding to Aurangabad and then to Hyderabad (Deccan) for the collection of funds for Jamia. From there, Zakir and myself are going to Mysore. Publicly our visit is to join the meeting of the Hind Samachar Sammelan, but in reality, to explore grounds for collection of money for Jamia.

You are just now enjoying your summer vacations. Would it be too much to hope that you would join us in Bhopal and go with us to Hyderabad and, if possible, also, Mysore for this work? Of course, you will have to bear your own expenses, as I shall be doing mine. I take it for granted that you would do so with greatest goodwill and alacrity. Please write to me at once if I may expect you to form part of our Deputation. I have already told you the date of our arrival in Bhopal, viz., 8th September, by Bombay Express, reaching there at 12.30. We expect to return from Mysore in the first week of October. Hoping to hear from you immediately.

With kind regards to Khursheed Begum and love to children.

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

63. From Osman Sobani

Bombay
16.8.1929

My dear Doctor Saheb,

I attended a Committee Meeting of the Bombay Presidency Congress Muslim Party¹ and suggested to Brelvi and others that they should

¹The object of the Congress Muslim Party was "to carry on propaganda in the Bombay Presidency in support of the Congress policy and programme among the Muslims and to induce them to join the Congress," and "to combat the forces of communalism and reaction."

change the name of the party to Bombay Muslim Nationalists Party and get affiliated to the All-India Muslim Nationalist Party.

Two young friends were opposed to it. I send you herewith a copy of a letter from one of them. Please let me know your views.

Should you agree with my proposal, you must suggest a way to Brelvi who is rather nervous of changing the name of the party so soon after its inauguration.

Yours affectionately,
Osman

64. From Syed Abdullah Brelvi¹

Bombay
18.8.1929

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am glad to get your letter. I regret I could not reply to you earlier. Among the papers that you have sent me I do not find copies of the constitution of the Party² or the resolutions in accordance with which the provincial organisations have been given complete autonomy. I am, however, glad that it will be possible for our party³ to get affiliation to the Central organisation without it being asked to change its constitution. I shall place your letter before the Executive Committee of the party and secure its formal sanction for affiliation to the Central organisation. I shall be obliged if you will kindly ask the Secretary to send me copies of the constitution of the Party and the resolutions passed at the meeting.

I am glad to know that you are coming to Bombay. I shall be obliged if you will kindly let me know a few days before you start

¹1891-1949; assistant editor, *Bombay Chronicle* in 1915. In 1920, when Marmaduke Pickthall took over from B.G. Horniman as Editor, Brelvi became the Joint Editor. In 1924, Pickthall resigned and from then until his death in January 1949, Brelvi was the Editor. He took a leading part in forming the Bombay Congress Muslim Party in 1929.

²The All-India Nationalist Muslim Party.

³Congress Muslim Party.

from Mysore or Hyderabad to Bombay, so that I may be able to arrange a meeting of Muslims convened under the auspices of our Party here.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Syed Abdullah Brelvi

65. To M.K. Gandhi

25.8.1929

My dear Mahatmaji,

I hope you have got rid of your dysentery and are, by now, able to digest something more substantial than water. I am very much concerned about the loss of weight reported by Dr. Jivraj Mehta. As it is, you have not an ounce of reserve weight in you. Any further loss of weight would be nothing short of dangerous in your case. I, therefore, hope that you would follow the instructions of Dr. Desai and put yourself entirely under the regime prescribed by him. It is very necessary that you should not only gain your lost weight, but be free from any colitis or other trouble before undertaking your tour in the United Provinces.

This brings me to the purpose for which I am writing this letter. As settled with Jawaharlal and yourself, I have arranged your Bhopal visit as under:—

There is some apprehension at Bhopal, owing to some private information having been received by some friends from Ahmedabad, that you are reaching Bhopal on the morning of the 8th.¹ I have just now received the enclosed letter from Raja Oudh Narayan Bisaria, Minister of Finance, Bhopal State. I hope you will kindly send a letter to

¹Gandhi reached Bhopal on September 8 on the invitation of the Nawab of Bhopal. He stayed there for two days reaching Agra on the 11th September.

the Military Secretary confirming the programme I have mentioned so that there may be no misapprehension in their mind.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

66. To Syed Mahmud¹

28.8.1929

My dear Mahmud,

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and I think that an early meeting of the Central Committee of the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party should be called to elect a regular Executive Committee and otherwise to place the Party on a permanent footing. For this purpose, we believe Patna to be the best venue and some date in the first week of October to be the most suitable. Should you agree with our suggestions, and should it be possible to make arrangements for the meeting at Patna, please let me know immediately so that we may send letters calling the meeting some time in the first week of October during the Durga Puja holidays.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

¹1889-1971; educated in Aligarh, Cambridge and Germany; attended Congress session in 1905 as a student; took a leading part in the students strike at Aligarh College, 1907; completed Ph.D. at the University of Munster in Germany, 1912; returned to India in 1913; much involved in the Khilafat Movement and was General-Secretary of the Central Khilafat Committee, 1921-6; general secretary AICC, 1923 and 1930-6; Education and Development Minister in Bihar 1937-9 and 1946; a close friend of the Nehrus, particularly Jawaharlal Nehru whom he met in November 1909.

67. From Mazharul Haque

3.9.1929

My dear Ansari,

Your last letter has remained unanswered for several reasons over which I had no control and do not think it necessary to enter into details. I am certain that you will forgive me for the delay.

I entirely agree with you that the Hindus are as much communalists as the Muslims. In my long life I have come to the conclusion that there is nothing to choose between the two. The only difference that I find between the two is that the Hindus are more united and more organised and that they have developed a political sense for their community. I wish to God that we had also the same sight to see things clearly.

I should like to know what you propose to do with the party¹ that you have formed? What is the next step that you are going to take? The first thing that I would urge is to bring about reconciliation between the opposing forces among the Muslims. I am firmly convinced that if only 4 or 5 Muslims tried to be friends the whole of this opposition will disappear. If you agree I should like to move in the matter and write to Mohammad and Shaukat to let me know their real intentions. The thing could be so arranged as to save the faces of everybody concerned and not to damage the cause of the Muslims. I would be anxiously waiting for your reply.

I am much obliged to you for enlisting me as a member of your association. I have also received a letter from Maulana Arif Haswi,² the Secretary, for the annual subscription, to whom I am sending the money.

With love,

Yours very affectionately,
M. Haque

¹All-India Nationalist Muslim Party.

²Maulana Arif Husain Haswi, a leading Congressman of Delhi; editor of an Urdu paper, *Hurriyat*; died 1936.

68. To Mazharul Haque¹

Delhi
7.9.1929

My dear Mazhar Bhai,

Thanks for your letter which I received the other day.

While nothing can be better than unity among Muslims, a compromise between the two wings of what was once the progressive section is, I am afraid, very difficult, if not impossible.

Ever since the Lucknow Convention many of us have been making ceaseless efforts to come to an understanding with the Ali Brothers and their friends. We tried at Lucknow, then at Patna and then finally at Calcutta, but we failed. Not only that. They gradually but surely went on receding from us until at last they found themselves in the company of the Aga Khan² and Sir Mohammad Shafi³ in January last. The willingness with which they associated themselves with people whose only distinction is that they have always been reactionary in regard both to Indian and Muslim affairs was surprising. Mohammad Ali actually seconded the resolution proposed by Sir Mohammad Shafi at the All-Parties Muslim Conference in Delhi. The Ali Brothers still stand by that resolution which no sensible Indian can entertain seriously but which they regard as the minimum of Muslim demands. This is not all. They have developed a point of view from which everything that is said or done by any Hindu or

¹*Mohammad Ali Papers*, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

²1875-1958; assumed spiritual headship of the Ismailis in August 1885; member of the Imperial Legislative Council, 1902-4; led the Simla Deputation to Minto, October 1906; president, All-India Muslim League, 1907-13; resigned because he found it impossible to lead the Muslims 'for my advise will be loyalty of the kind that means trust and confidence the Muslims are not now giving to government'; president of the All-India All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi, December 1928; chairman of the British Indian delegation to the Round Table Conference of 1930 and 1931; led the Indian delegation to the League of Nations, 1932, 1934-7; president of the League of Nations, 1937.

³Mian Mohammad Shafi (b. 1869); president All-India Muslim League, 1913; president, All-India Muslim Educational Conference, 1916; member, Provincial and Imperial Legislative Councils, 1909-19; education member, government of India, 1919-22; law member, government of India, 1922-4; led the campaign in the Punjab against the boycott of the Simon Commission, 1927; one of the organisers of the All-India Muslim Conference, 1928; a conservative politician who opposed Muslims joining the Congress and favoured their cooperation with the government.

Nationalist Muslim appears to them to be the direct result of Hindu Mahasabha influence. Their new mentality admits of only two divisions in India, Hindu and Muslim, and not Nationalist and reactionary or non-cooperating and co-operating.

Indeed the differences that in their origin concerned a few provisions of the Nehru Report have now grown into a conflict of the very outlook. This to my mind explained why the Ali Brothers are adopting an irreconcilable attitude although they know very well that they are thereby strengthening the government as well as the communalists, both Hindu and Muslim.

It was in view of all this and the consequent conviction that they have gone too far to come back that we decided to start the Nationalist Muslim Party and do what⁴...

⁴The remaining portion of the letter is missing.

69. To Jawaharlal Nehru

19.10.1929

My dear Jawaharlal,

I got both your letters dated September 11th and October 14th on my return to Delhi day before yesterday. I hope *Bhabhi*¹ has come back from Calcutta completely cured and in good health. You do not say in your letter dated October 14th where you would be staying at Mussoorie. But I suppose if I address this letter to Kashmiri Hotel, it would reach you all right. The news of Mahatmajī's visit to Delhi on the first of November, though natural in his course of tour to Muzaffarnagar and Meerut, was not expected. I have seen one or two workers and am calling a meeting tomorrow to discuss the matters. My own feeling is that it would be very difficult to get a good purse in Delhi at such short notice. You know that Delhi is one of the biggest markets for foreign cloth. And, all the well-to-do people here are, directly or indirectly, connected with the cloth trade. As we are doing vigorous propaganda by holding meetings in the various

¹Kamla Nehru (1899-1936) was married to Jawaharlal Nehru in February 1916.

Mohallas against foreign cloth, one cannot go and ask the foreign cloth merchants for money for Mahatmaji. The lawyers, doctors and hakims of Delhi are all ultra-loyalists and have never taken part in any Congress activities from the beginning to this day. The Muslim shopkeepers are under the influence of Maulana Mohammad Ali and his coterie and are deadly opposed to the Congress. There remain only petty Hindu shopkeepers and a few others, from whom not much money can be expected at a time when famine conditions are prevailing and business is at its lowest ebb.

I am, therefore, not at all hopeful. But, I shall finally inform you after discussing things over with the Congress workers here. I wonder how Mahatmaji's health has stood the severe strain of the long tour in U.P. Please convey my best regards to him.

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

70. From Motilal Nehru

Allahabad
25.10.1929

My dear Ansari,

You have not had the grace to acknowledge a valuable legal opinion sent to you *gratis* which would have knocked a fairly big hole in the pocket of a client.

The Nawab Saheb¹ writes to say that the issue in which the apology to me was published was a restricted one. It was not sold publicly and was not supplied to other newspapers in exchange as other issues used to be. This is the information he has received and he has asked me to make my own enquiries on the subject. I do not know how to make these enquiries except through you who are on the spot. Perhaps Basit will do some C.I.D. work for me and find out if Nawab Saheb's information is correct. If it is, there has been no proper publication of the apology and my cause of action stands.

I have not replied to Nawab Saheb's last letter as it was received when I was starting for Lucknow. I came back only last night. He

¹Nawab Hamidullah Khan of Bhopal.

is probably now in Delhi for the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Princes. If you meet him please give him my *salaams* and tell him that I shall write when he goes back to Bhopal if I do not meet him in Delhi in the course of the next few days which is very likely. It is generally believed that Irwin will invite some of us for an informal talk soon after his arrival in Delhi. So far I have only been asked what my address would be on the 28th and 29th.

Please let me know if you have come to any decision about prosecuting the *Riyasat*.

Swarup gave birth to a daughter last night. The mother and child are well.

Yours sincerely,
Motilal Nehru

71. From Sasanka Mohan Das Gupta

Dacca
11.11.1929

Sir,

I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of a resolution passed at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Peoples' Association, Dacca, held on the 9th November, 1929 for favour of your information.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient servant,
Sasanka Mohan Das Gupta

Resolution No. 11.

That the Dacca Peoples' Association fully endorses the statement published over the signatures of Mahatma Gandhi and other Indian political leaders in reply to the recent Viceregal announcement about Dominion form of Government in India and invitation to Indian representatives to a Round Table Conference and urges upon all

political parties to lend their weighty support to the said statement and close up their ranks; that in the opinion of the Association any attempt at whittling down of the Viceregal announcement will produce disastrous result in India.

72. To Tasadduq Ahmad Khan Sherwani

6.1.1930

My dear Tasadduq,

I had a mind to write what I am doing now in the letter which I gave for you to your young friend, Mr. Farooqi. But, on second thought I am sending it by post, in case he may forget to deliver it to you or give you after many days.

I have been thinking very seriously about the present situation ever since the Congress session, and more so, on the receipt of our joint message through Ghulam Mohammad and Shuaib. In deference partly to your wishes and partly to my own inclination, I have, with greatest difficulty, prevented my appointment as one of the General Secretaries to the A.I.C.C. and as a member of the Working Committee of the Congress. I am, also, writing today to the Delhi P.C.C. resigning from the presidentship or any other executive post that they have elected me to. But, beyond this I must not go. I must remain in the Congress, although not as one of its executives. This position is the only honourable and honest one for me and you to take. Owing to our doubts and differences from the present programme and policy this is the right and just thing for us to do. But, we must not leave the Congress, nor must we do anything to weaken the Congress. After all, the will of the majority must prevail, that is the only guide for any democratic institution.

I would beg of you, also, to do nothing more than what I have done myself. To leave the Congress, would be to commit political suicide, to oppose the Congress would be a crime. Therefore, we must remain in the Congress and let those who believe in the present policy and programme carry on. As for any idea of joining the Liberals or the communalists it is unthinkable for you and me. The Liberals will never do anything, even though they are kicked out of the Round

Table Conference. They will work whatever reforms the Government is pleased to give them. You know, as well as I do, that they are never ready for any action except passing resolutions and signing protests. And these things would not get you, even the most diluted form of Dominion Status. Therefore, for you and me to think of joining them is out of question. As regards the Muslim communalists, we have, with the greatest difficulty and after a great deal of struggle, extricated ourselves from them. We have formed the "Nationalist Muslim Party" and it would be the height of unwisdom to leave that Party or to cease working for its objects. To my mind, that is the only avenue left for our political activities. We must put all our mind to it and carry on a vigorous campaign to wean the Muslims away from the influences of communalists and reactionary leaders and think and act in terms of 'nationalism'. That is the only channel left for our political activities. I am enclosing a manifesto published by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and myself, on behalf of the "Nationalist Muslim Party". We were authorized to do so at our meeting held in Lahore on the 2nd January. I hope you would agree with us and would give your help and support to us.

I have had a long talk with Khaliq, at Lucknow and he, not only entirely agrees with me, but has authorized me to urge you to act in the manner that he and I have decided to do. I hope your mental sickness has been cured.

With love,

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

**73. To the Working Secretary,
Delhi Provincial Congress Committee,
DELHI.**

Delhi
6.1.1930

Dear Sir,

Unfortunately, owing to an urgent professional call, I was not present in Delhi when the elections for the year took place. But, I had sent

you a letter requesting not to elect me as the president of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee, for this year and not to nominate me to the Working Committee. On the eve of my departure for Lahore, I learnt that my request was not acceded to, and I was elected to these posts. Whilst heartily thanking you for this expression of confidence, I beg to be relieved from these offices (Presidentship of the Provincial Congress Committee and membership of the Provincial Working Committee). I consider myself absolved of all responsibilities from today. Please take this as my considered and final request. Please place this before your Committee, at the earliest opportunity.

I remain,
Sir,
Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

74. To M.K. Gandhi

10.2.1930

Dear Mahatmaji.

I received your postcard on my return from Bhopal last evening. I have met Pandit Motilalji and have explained to him the reasons for my inability to accompany him to Ahmedabad. I hope the same reasons will also convince you of the fact that, much as I wish to act up to your command, I am unable to do so owing to an unforeseen professional responsibility.

For the last two weeks, I have been repeatedly and persistently requested by the Chief Secretary, Jaora State, to go over there and examine the Begum Sahiba, who is lying sick in bed. But, owing to some more urgent and important engagements in Delhi and elsewhere, I was unable as yet to concede to his request. The latest telegram from Jaora, however, about the patient's condition, has brought about a situation in which my visit to that place cannot be postponed any longer. I have very old professional relations with the ruler of the State and am, therefore, compelled to leave for Jaora by tonight's train.

I do not know for how many days I will have to stay there for her treatment, but I can guess so far that I may not be released in time to attend the meeting of the Working Committee. So there is very little possibility of my coming to Ahmedabad at present. Still if the impossible happens and I am not detained longer, I shall make it a point to come to you either on the 13th or on the 15th instant.

I myself wish I could do so, as I have to discuss with you many things that are uppermost in my mind at present. I am feeling very unhappy over the things that are happening, and I see that the forecast which I gave to you at Lahore and to Motilalji at Delhi is now coming true. I am able to say from personal knowledge that many stalwarts of our ranks are now lagging behind. The demonstrations of 26th January are not correct indications of their true spirit, and should not mislead us into forming an incorrect estimate of the support that we may receive from them. It is one thing to join a procession, but it is quite another to face hardships and to withstand repression when time comes for real action. May I, therefore, suggest that it is not safe to base any future programme of work on wrong calculations, for such an act may result in failure and disappointment.

I hope you are keeping quite fit and healthy.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

75. To Motilal Nehru

13.2.1930

My dear Pandit Ji, .

I am afraid that Her Highness the Begum of Wei is so very ill with general Peritonitis, fever and general weakness, that it is impossible for me to think of leaving her for the next eight or ten days. I would, therefore, request you to take your injection on the 15th by some competent doctor at Ahmedabad. You have seen the technique and can direct him, if necessary. I hope I shall be available in Delhi by the time your next injection falls due on the 21st or 22nd. Please accept my apology.

I hope you would, after reading the letter I have written to Mahatmaji, appreciate my sense of loyalty and devotion to you, and the Congress and not misjudge me.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

76. To Jawaharlal Nehru

Jaora
13.2.1930

My dear Jawaharlal,

I am sorry it is impossible for me to be with you. I am wanted here by my patient who is very ill. I have been wanting to have a frank and full talk with you, but, my letter to Mahatmaji which I have asked him to share with you and Panditji would give you all I had to tell you. I am sure, you would not misunderstand one who honestly feels differently from you.

Yours affectionately,
Mukhtar

77. To M.K. Gandhi

Jaora
13.2.1930

My dear Mahatma Ji,

I wrote to you from Delhi last Monday. The letter was dictated in a hurry in a few moments snatched during a very strenuous day. It naturally did not express all that I wanted to tell you. Further, I was hoping I would be able to get away from here in time to be with you

on the 14th or the 15th. I find, however, to my disappointment, that my patient here is suffering from Peritonitis and is so very ill that I cannot even mention my leaving her. Indeed, it does not seem possible to get away from here for another week or ten days. I am, therefore, writing to you as the next best thing to my being with you in person at such a critical moment. I feel I owe it to Pt. Jawaharlal, Pt. Motilal, yourself and your colleagues in the Working Committee, who have got the reins of the Congress in their hands and are leading the country, to tell you frankly, what I feel about your policy and programme in relation to the present situation in the country. I would try to be as brief as possible, but you would excuse me if this letter becomes somewhat long in spite of my efforts to curtail it.

Hindu-Muslim unity is not only one of the basic items in our programmes, but according to my firm belief and conviction, **the one and only** basic thing. I would have liked to trace the whole history of our efforts to achieve unity but I would take up the most recent history, viz., from autumn of the year 1927. You would remember how the Unity Conference at Simla¹ failed in spite of every effort made there. I felt after its failure that it was not possible to have agreement between extreme communal groups, but that it was feasible to have a workable agreement between Nationalist Hindus and Nationalist Muslims. I, therefore, urged Srinivasa Iyengar, the then President of the Congress, to convene another peace conference at Calcutta under the aegis of the Congress, and in more suitable surroundings than the Simla Conference. The Calcutta Conference² brought about an understanding between the Congress and the Muslims of all shades of opinion, as evidence by the warm welcome given to the Pact even by such Muslims as Mohammad Shafi, Sir Zulfiqar Ali, Dr. Mohammad Iqbal³ and many others. This Pact, with certain modifications suggested by you, was passed at the Madras

¹The Unity Conference at Simla was held from September 14 to 17, 1927.

²The Calcutta Unity Conference was held on October 27-28, 1927.

³1876-1938; a distinguished poet in Persian and Urdu. He was born at Sialkot of Kashmiri Brahmin stock and educated at the Scotch Mission College at Sialkot, Government College, Lahore, Cambridge and Munich. In 1928, he put together his philosophical exposition in his six lectures on the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. In 1930, he presided over the annual session of the Muslim League at Allahabad and called for the establishment of an autonomous Muslim State in the north-west of British India.

Congress⁴ and was agreed to by Pt. Malaviya.⁵ I have not the slightest doubt that if we had stuck to it we would have gradually overcome the opposition of the Hindu Mahasabha and Hindu-Muslim unity would have been an accomplished fact by now. But, we wanted to be just and fair and in our effort to do justice and bring greater harmony and unity in the shape of the Nehru Constitution, I am afraid we lost at Lucknow and Calcutta what we had gained at Madras. The Muslims were the first to revolt against the Nehru Report at Lucknow⁶ followed closely by the Sikhs. But, at the Calcutta Convention⁷, it was the Hindu Mahasabha which completely did the work of destruction. I cannot help expressing that the speech made by Mr. Jayakar⁸ and subsequently the attitude in the Committee taken by Pt. Malaviya, Dr. Moonje and Hindu Mahasabha friends destroyed all chances of understanding. Professor Jatindra Lal Bannerji's motion for the reservation of seats for 40% Hindu minority in Bengal which was carried in the Convention and only withdrawn at my special appeal and request, was a painful revelation. Pt. Motilal's cold reception to Mr. Jinnah⁹ who, I had succeeded after a great deal of effort to come and see Panditji at his house, was also a great disappointment. After that the communalist Muslims got the chance and the Muslim attitude hardened as shown by the absurd resolution passed at the All-Parties Muslim Conference at Delhi¹⁰ and

⁴The Madras Congress was held in 1927.

⁵Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946); president of the Indian National Congress, 1919, 1918; president of the Hindu Mahasabha 1916, 1917, 1923, 1924, 1926, 1936; founder of Benares Hindu University and Vice-Chancellor, 1919-1939.

⁶The All-Parties Conference was held at Lucknow from August 28th to 31st, 1928.

⁷The All-Parties National Convention was held at the end of December 1928 in Calcutta.

⁸M.R. Jayakar, who represented the Hindu Mahasabha point of view at the National Convention, pointed out that Jinnah represented only a small minority of Muslims and there was no guarantee that if the Convention agreed to his amendments, the rest of the Muslims would abide by such an agreement.

⁹Jinnah had a grievance that Motilal Nehru had given him a cold reception at the National Convention.

¹⁰The All-Parties Muslim Conference was held under the Presidentship of the Aga Khan.



Jawaharlal Nehru, in a group photograph with
Jamnalal Bajaj, Motilal Nehru, M.A. Ansari,
Rajendra Prasad and other Congress volunteers

subsequently the Fourteen Points of Mr. Jinnah.¹¹

The year 1929, in spite of the great influence and efforts of Panditji yourself and Pt. Jawaharlal, did not see the constructive programme advance and the quota fixed in May last year, was not completed by most of the Congress Committees. The Sikh situation was, in the meantime, going from bad to worse.

In such circumstances when I read the advance copy of the Viceroy's statement of November 1st, I considered it God-sent (as the telephonic message sent by me to Panditji and received by Jawaharlal would bear out). I at once took Vallabhbhai with me and met you at Meerut. We found you less enthusiastic, more cautious, but on the whole, taking a very favourable view of the announcement. At the Conference held in Delhi on November 1st, you would remember I pressed for certain parts of Dr. Sapru's statement to be embodied in yours. The reason was that I found myself in agreement with him. I was representing not only my own personal views, but those of a group consisting of Messrs Khaliquzzaman,¹² Tasadduq Ahmad Sherwani, Rafi Kidwai, Dr. Mahmud and a few others. At Lahore I expressed the same views in the Working Committee. When asked by Panditji, to give my opinion on the 22nd of last December in Delhi, I told him that owing to our internal dissensions, unpreparedness and weakness I would advise him not to let the Conference with the Viceroy break up, but to utilise it to the fullest advantage. Panditji characterized

¹¹The first draft of the 14 Points of Jinnah was presented before the All-Parties National Convention. The final draft of these points was in the form of a resolution which Jinnah moved at the Muslim League meeting on 28 March 1929. The Fourteen Points included the demand for a Federal constitution with residuary powers vested in the province, one-third of Muslim representation in the Central Legislature, representation on the basis of separate electorates, the separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency, and the introduction of reforms in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.

¹²1889-1973; a contemporary of Shuaib Qureshi, bdur Rahman Siddiqi and Raja Ghulam Husain, at Aligarh, 1907-12, editor of *New Era*; after leaving Aligarh employed as Education Secretary by the Raja of Mahmudabad; joined the Congress in 1916 and became joint-secretary of the Muslim League in the same year; elected President of the Lucknow Congress Committee, March 1920; gave up practice, October 1920; joined the Swarajists January 1923; chairman, Lucknow Municipal Board, 1923; led the boycott against the Simon Commission in Lucknow, 1928; leading member of the Nationalist Muslim Party organised by Ansari; member of the Congress Parliamentary Board, 1934; after 1937 became a close lieutenant of Mohammad Ali Jinnah; author of *Pathway to Pakistan*; a close friend of Ansari whose affection, in Khaliquzzaman's own words, 'for me was greatest as was mine for him'.

my observations as based on weakness. I repudiated the charge, but our conversation ended. When I heard that the Conference between you and the Viceroy had ended without any agreement, I was disappointed.¹³ At the meeting of the Working Committee held in Lahore last December and on one or two subsequent occasions, I expressed similar views but with the exception of Mrs. Naidu, I did not find support. I have felt that the situation has been mishandled both by the Viceroy and our own representatives. The Viceroy was obviously very much shaken by the bomb outrage¹⁴ and was not in his normal frame of mind. For I do not see how even with the limited powers given to him he could have failed to give you the necessary assurance for a scheme of Dominion Status to be the basis of discussion at the Round Table Conference. I cannot, for the life of me, imagine after reading and re-reading the statements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, what else could be the basis of discussion at the Round Table Conference if not a scheme of Dominion Status. It may be a very incomplete scheme which would form the basis, even our own scheme presented in the Nehru Constitution was not a scheme of complete Dominion Status. The final decisions would be matters for adjustments, understanding and bargains, as it is bound to be at any time. But, at any rate, it would have given us the chance of placing the demand of India before the British Cabinet and the British people and, I am sure, in spite of our differences on communal matters, they would have been obliged to concede our demand of Dominion Constitution to a very great extent. This has been my view all along and is my view today.

I did not feel that it would be in the interest of the Congress to resign from the Working Committee at Lahore and expressed my views in the All-India Congress Committee and in the open Congress. I felt that there were already sufficient divisions in the Congress and one more division would not have improved the situation. Out of loyalty to the Congress and my personal devotion to you, Pt. Motilal and Jawaharlal, I kept quiet. But I deliberately refused the General Secretaryship and the membership of the Working Committee and took the risk of being misunderstood rather than say or do anything to injure the Congress. At the same time, not being in sympathy

¹³The talks held on the 23 December, 1929, were unsuccessful because the Viceroy was not prepared to give the assurance that the purpose of the proposed Round Table Conference was to draft a scheme for Dominion Status.

¹⁴The Bomb Explosion was caused by a time fuse while the Viceroy was coming from Hyderabad to Delhi. The Viceroy escaped unhurt,

with the policy and programme of the Congress I could not be one of its executives. The same reason led me to resign from the Presidentship of the Provincial Congress Committee of Delhi and membership of the Provincial Executive. Indeed, the only thing possible for me and those who think like me was to drop out of the Congress Executive. And whilst not opposing the policy and programme of the Congress or doing anything to injure it by our actions or words, to remain as one of its camp followers. So far as I am aware, Mrs. Naidu, Rangaswami Iyengar,¹⁵ Pt. Harkaran Nath Misra,¹⁶ Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, R. A. Kidwai, T. A. K. Sherwani and a few other leading Congressmen (whose names I may not mention) hold similar views.

You are taking a great responsibility on yourself by declaring war against the Government today. The situation today is quite the reverse of what it was in 1920, when you started the campaign of non-cooperation. I would briefly compare the situation in a comparative table as under; of course, it is not complete, but I am giving only the salient features:

(1920)	(1930)
(1) Great dissatisfaction against the Govt. owing to war-time promises not having been kept. Dissatisfaction against Rowlatt Act, Martial Law and Khilafat wrongs.	(1) Large number of people believe in the goodwill of the Labour Govt. and sincerity of the Viceroy, rightly or wrongly.
(2) Highest watermark reached in Hindu-Muslim unity.	(2) Lowest watermark reached in Hindu-Muslim disunity.
(3) Sikhs entirely with the Congress.	(3) Sikhs almost entirely against the Congress.

¹⁵1877-1934; editor of the *Hindu*; general secretary of the Congress, 1926-27; elected to the Central Legislative Assembly; secretary of the Swaraj Party from 1925 and worked closely with Motilal Nehru.

¹⁶General Secretary of the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee and Vice-Chairman of the Lucknow Municipality.

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| <p>(4) Complete unity inside the Congress. Great enthusiasm among the workers and the rank and file.</p> | <p>(4) Disunity in the Congress (revolt against its mandate), diversity of purpose, complete lack of enthusiasm amongst the workers. Lukewarmness amongst the rank and file.</p> |
| <p>(5) Complete non-violent atmosphere and yet breaking of violence in Chauri Chaura.</p> | <p>(5) Obvious existence of violence, even large number of leading Congressmen believing in it and the certainty of violence breaking out.</p> |

Like Harish Chandra you seem to be bent on keeping the word given by you at Calcutta, irrespective of consequences. I feel as if you are deliberately offering yourself as a sacrifice. I earnestly submit to you for your consideration that, to the demand made at Calcutta there has been a response. It is not satisfactory from your point of view. But, it is all that the Govt. can make, and certainly, it cannot be said that there has been no response. I, therefore, urge that the question of keeping your word in case of no response to the Calcutta offer does not arise and, therefore, the idea of keeping your word at all costs is not morally justifiable and certainly it is not politically expedient.

I hope I have made my position quite clear to you. Holding the views stated above all feeling that the real test of our preparedness lies more in the results achieved with regard to the enrolment of members and volunteers, collections of funds, and above all, in the achievement of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh unity rather than the demonstrations held all over the country on Independence Day, it is my conviction that the country is not the least ready for starting a campaign of civil disobedience in any shape or form, and it would do an incalculable damage should you decide to embark on such a campaign now or in the near future. I would, therefore, earnestly urge you and the members of the Working Committee, to desist from doing so. I believe that if you could see the wisdom of passing a resolution asking the Congress organisations for intensive preparation including H.M.S., understanding, but in the meantime postponing the campaign of civil disobedience for the present, until you find yourself ready and obliged to start civil disobedience, it would meet the present situation

much better and give a chance to those countrymen of ours who are thinking of participating in the London Round Table Conference.

I wish you to share this letter with Pt. Jawaharlal and Pt. Motilal Nehru. I hope this would find you in the best of health.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

78. From M.K. Gandhi

Sabarmati
16.2.1930

Dear Dr. Ansari,

It is now 3.30 A.M. I have been struggling to find time to give you a few lines. Your letter I appreciate. It was first seen by Motilalji and Jawaharlal and then read to the Working Committee. There were various comments. No one, however, thought that there was anything in it to warrant a departure from the Lahore programme. I agree that the Hindu-Muslim problem is the problem of problems. But I feel that it has to be approached in a different manner from the one we have hitherto adopted—not at present by adjustment of the political power but by one or the other acting on the square under all circumstances. Give and take is possible only when there is some trust between the respective communities and their representatives. If the Congress can command such trust the matter can proceed further, not before. The Congress can do so only by becoming fearless and strictly just. But meanwhile the third party—the evil British power—has got to be sterilised. There will be no charter of independence before the Hindus and the Muslims have met but there can be virtual independence before the charter is received. Hence must civil disobedience be forged from day to day by those who believe that there is no escape from non-violence and that violence will never bring freedom to India.

I do not know if I have made myself clear. Anyway my own personal line is cast. I fancy that I see my way clear now. There will be

no turning back. I can live if God wills and if He finds work for me. I have no interest in living if there is no work for me in the direction for which He appears to me to have called me. If all this be hallucination I must perish in the flames of my own lighting. I want you then to cheer up. It does not matter at all if we do not see eye to eye. It is well with us if our hearts are pure, as I know they are.

Yours ever,
M.K. Gandhi

I had a heart to heart chat with Shuaib. He has promised to meet you. I would love to see as he does. You may share this with him or any friend you like.

M.K.G.

79. From Motilal Nehru

17.2.30

My dear Ansari,

I left Ahmedabad this morning and am dictating this letter from the train. As I am going to Delhi where I hope to meet you sooner or later I should in the ordinary course have reserved what I am going to say for a personal talk. But somehow or other things have ceased to happen in the ordinary course even in our own small group of Congressmen and I thought it necessary to put the few words I have to say on paper, so that there may be no mistake about it.

Let me at the outset assure you of my fullest confidence in your loyalty to the cause and your personal regard and affection for me. It is not for the first time that we have differed on public questions and unfortunate as it is at the present juncture I feel as I have felt in the past that this difference proceeds from a strict sense of duty on both sides.

I have very carefully read and re-read your letter to Gandhiji. But while I fully admit the importance you give to Hindu-Muslim unity I

am sorry to say that I find myself in disagreement with you both as to the reasons why we have so far failed to achieve it and the direction in which further effort should be made. Both you and I have for years past been working as hard as we could to lay a solid foundation for this unity. But it has to be confessed that we have failed miserably. As a result of past experience and anxious thought I have now reached the conclusion that the lines upon which we worked were fundamentally wrong. This truth did flash upon our minds from time to time while we worked together and we tried to retrace our steps as in Lahore when we called a meeting of the *Mohalla* Chowdharies but we found ourselves in a vicious circle impossible to get out of at that stage. The fact is that we have been appealing to the wrong court all these years. We may go on doing so to the end of eternity but will get no relief. If the cold reception of an individual however great in one place and a rather hot reception of the same individual in another place is to affect the solution of the great national problem we had better say goodbye to it.

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru is now making the same mistake and has indeed taken it up at the point where we left it. I have no doubt that he will soon be disillusioned. But I have no desire to stand in his way and have decided to let him go on unhampered by adverse criticism till he is tired and retires from the field for which I am sure I shall not have to wait for more than a few weeks if not a few days.

It is difficult to do more than indicate my plans in this letter. It is now my firm conviction that Hindu-Muslim unity cannot be achieved by preaching it. We have to bring it about in a manner which will accomplish it without either Hindus or Muslims realising that they are working for unity. This can only be done on an economic basis and in the course of the fight for freedom from the usurper. When one community is fighting for the right to live which is common to both it is impossible to conceive that the other community will not sooner or later realise the consequences of success or failure. And having realised those consequences it is equally impossible to conceive that it will not throw itself wholeheartedly into the conflict. The master mind has amidst much ridicule and misrepresentation discovered one such economic basis in the breaking of the salt laws. The thing, to use his own favourite phrase, is "incredibly simple". The only wonder is that no one else ever thought of it. It is impossible to say at this stage whether even so simple a thing will catch the imagination of the people but if it does a tremendous victory is assured to both Hindus and Muslims. If it does not there

is no hope for us and it is idle to talk of Hindu-Muslim unity and constitutional and communal rights.

You say the country is not ready for civil disobedience. If so, when and how are you going to make it ready? Do you believe that in the present temper of the so-called leaders of the two communities it is possible to arrive at any formula? Even if it were possible which I seriously doubt how far will the existence of that formula on paper carry us in our conflict with the foreign Government? It requires the stout optimism of an Indian Liberal which can read a definite "no" as a clear "yes" to believe that the Government will surrender completely the moment such a formula is reached. I have definitely come to hold the opinion that no amount of formulae based upon mutual concessions which those making them have no right to make will bring us any nearer Hindu-Muslim unity than we are at present.

You have given a retrospect of the events which have happened during the past few years. I have little to say about this including the reference to the cold reception I gave to Mr. Jinnah. What Mr. Jinnah said on the occasion left me cold and I could not work up an artificial warmth to please him.

You have also explained your own position and the reasons which led you to act in the manner you did. With the views you held no reasonable man can blame you for your action.

Lastly you have entered into a detailed comparison between the situation as obtained in 1920 and as it obtains now. No two situations in the history of any country with an interval of ten years between them can be exactly alike. Some of the points you have given come to me as a surprise, e.g., the faith of the people in the goodwill of the Labour Government and the sincerity of the Viceroy, the fact that there has been on the part of the Government all the response to the Calcutta resolution that it could make. But it is only necessary to say that I do not agree in your analysis. I think on the contrary that it is a question of now or never.

I hope you will give me the credit of fully realising what it means to me and mine to throw in my lot with Gandhiji in the coming struggle. Nothing but a deep conviction that the time for the greatest effort and the greatest sacrifice has come would have induced me to expose myself at my age and with my physical disabilities and with my family obligations to the tremendous risks I am incurring. I hear the clarion call of the country and I obey.

Yours sincerely,
Motilal Nehru

80. To Rafi Ahmad Kidwai

Jaora
18.2.1930

My dear Rafi,

The very next day after my return to Delhi from Bhopal, *i.e.* 10th Feb., I had to leave for Jaora owing to pressing call from there due to the Begum of Wei's severe illness. My patient is improving, but is still far from well and I am, therefore, obliged to stay here. I am hoping, however, that I would be able to return to Delhi by the 23rd of this month, and thus not be too late for your stay there.

I had intended visiting Ahmedabad on the 14th, in order to press my views on Mahatmaji and the members of the Working Committee, but I was precluded from doing so owing to the need of my attendance on my patient here. I, however, sent a letter¹ with special messenger to Mahatmaji, in order to place my views on the present situation at such a momentous time and try to induce the Working Committee to defer starting civil disobedience. The enclosed letter and the reply received from Gandhiji² would give you all that is required to know about it. I am very sorry for the decision taken by the Working Committee and I fear worst consequences.

I hope you have sent the telegrams to Maulvi Abdul Qadir, Sherwani, Khaliquzzaman and Shah Mohd. Zubair as advised by means of a telegram sent to you addressed to 1, Daryaganj, Delhi. We must capture all the vacant seats in the Muslim League Council. You must consult together and have a complete list of men of our way of thinking ready for proposing in the meeting of the Council of the Muslim League to be held in Delhi on the 23rd.

I am also sending you cuttings of my speech on the Independence Day and the correction of certain misreported parts of it. This would give you my ideas regarding the attempt of Dr. Sapru to bring about Hindu-Muslim understanding.

Please show this letter to Tasadduq, Khaliq, Shah Mohd. Zubair, Maulana Abdul Qadir, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, and any other

¹Ansari to Gandhi, February 13, 1930.

²Gandhi to Ansari, February 16, 1930.

members of the Nationalist Muslim Party who may come to attend the meeting of the League, or who you may desire to show it.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

81. From Syed Mahmud

1930

My dear Doctor,

I see it is impossible to have a talk with you. I, therefore, reduce all what I want to tell you into these few lines.

At Lahore I never knew what was in your mind. You never told me so. I had a long talk with Gandhiji on the 24th of December at Lahore and emphasized on Hindu-Muslim question. I wanted to press it further but Maulana Azad and yourself were quiet and therefore I thought nobody would hear me and even you too may not like it. The Lahore resolution was passed and I thought it my duty as true Congressman to support it whether I liked it or not. I considered that you would do the same and therefore I went on supporting it. At Ahmedabad I placed all the difficulties before the Working Committee and I told them that the government will organise Muslims riff raff to create troubles on the lines of Dacca and after a dozen of such riots Hindu workers of the Congress will join in the communal conflicts and leave this work. Gandhiji said he realises it but it cannot be helped. They have to march ahead, there was no other alternative. Then the question of flag was raised. Jairamdas wanted one colour while Sardul Singh wanted Sikh colour. I was particularly asked to speak about it. I said my community was not taking any part in the struggle and it was indifferent to it. Thereupon Panditji, Patel and others opposed it and the question was dropped for the time. I read your letter. The only thing I have to say about it is I wish I knew your views at Lahore. I read contempt in the faces of

great leaders for the Muslims. They thoroughly deserve contempt, I know, but even then it pained me.

Now a word about my own self. I address these lines to you as a friend. I cannot afford to give up practice at the Bar—you know all the circumstances, and at the same time I believe it a disloyalty to a friend like Jawaharlal to desert him at this moment—specially after your letter. I am torn between these two conflicting duties. I want a word of advice from a sane cool-headed and sincere friend like yourself. I must finish.

Yours affectionately,
Syed Mahmud

82. To Choudhry Khaliquzzaman

24.2.1930

My dear Khaliq,

As usual, you are silent after my last letter posted on the 18th of this month. I do not even know and, probably, shall never know whether you received it or not, and whether you have approved of my ideas and actions or not. Unfortunately, I am neither a Shuaib nor a Sherwani to deserve your attentions. I have always to take the back seat and be contended with cold and different treatment from friends.

I must tell you that, although, I have long ago accustomed myself to these treatments, even from such friends as Sindhi, Shuaib and yourself, I am still humane enough to sometimes win at unkind cuts. The last one administered by you was when in spite of promising me not to act without consulting together and in spite of the promise given to me not to stand for the Assembly, you neither thought it fit to inform me of your intentions (as you did to Sherwani), neither did you keep your promise to me. But I must not forget my place. Who am I to grumble, what am I to take offence to such things?

Anyhow, so far as I am concerned, I wish to keep to my contract and keep you posted of my doings and wait for your approval or disapproval.

I have sent a cable to Rahman and have asked him to come back to India about the end of March, firstly, because I feel that I am suffering from 'superiority complex' and feel certain that the great London and Paris specialists have gone entirely off the track and that my treatment would help him more towards recovery than those of London and Paris doctors, and secondly, because I would like Shuaib to be wedded by the end of March and his presence at the wedding would be absolutely indispensable. I hope he would be able to make up his mind and come to India.

Another matter of importance is the meeting of the Muslim League Council which is to be held on the 28th. On the suggestions made by Sherwani, Kidwai and yourself, I have promised to contribute Rs. 500 towards the expenses of calling friends from U.P., Bihar, and Punjab of our way of thinking. Although, personally, I am neither convinced of its utility nor clear as to the line of action possible for us. But, the suggestion made by Basit seems very good. And it is that those of us who, feeling bound by the Congress mandate of rejecting the Round Table Conference need not go to the Round Table Conference, but we can, by getting Nationalist Muslims elected to the vacancies in the Council prevent it from. . .¹

¹The remaining portion of the letter is missing.

83. To Motilal Nehru

Jaora
24.2.1930

My dear Panditji,

I had hoped to snatch half an hour and to be with you just before your leaving Delhi. But, I found it impossible. I reached the Railway Station hardly a couple of minutes before my train was due to start. But, I found that it left some twenty minutes later in which I might have easily seen you and talked over a few things which I wanted to tell you.

The first and the most important is about yourself. I was considerably disturbed on hearing about the listlessness and apathy which has come over you recently. It is undoubtedly the result of extreme mental and psychic fatigue. You know it better than I can tell you that you have been rather unsparing and unfair to yourself at your age in undertaking work which even a young man would hesitate in undertaking and you are paying the price for it, I am afraid, too dearly. I would beg and urge you to give yourself complete mental rest, or rather as complete as is possible. I would, therefore, suggest that you should take the Privy Council case and go over to Europe for four to six months.

I am myself contemplating a journey to Europe. My heart which has been troubling me for a considerable time is now giving me repeated warnings. I can hardly walk fast or climb a few steps without feeling acute anginous pain and shortness of breath. I am trying to save sufficient money to undertake four to six months rest in Europe. It is just possible that I may be able to do so. The other reason is that there is no work left for me for the present, in India.

The last thing and the one which I wanted to speak to you on Saturday was about Lala Girdhari Lal. He is in a very bad financial strait and a little moral support from you would go a very long way in helping him. It was at my express request that you were good enough to accept the membership of the Board of Directors of the Tropical Insurance Company, Delhi. Lala Girdhari Lal has been pressing me for some time to absolve you from that promise as, I understand, you had told him that unless I did that you could not resign from the Tropical Insurance Company. I have now had a talk with the Managing Director, Lala Shanker Lal and, although he is naturally most unwilling to part with such a very important director, I have told him that he must not be selfish and now that his Company is flourishing it would not matter if he allowed Panditji to retire from the Tropical Insurance and give the benefit of his status to Lala Girdhari Lal's Company. I hope, therefore, that if this is the sole reason of your refusal to Lala Girdhari Lal you would not hesitate on that account.

I was very glad to learn from Jawahar that the fears apprehended about Kamla in Bombay, have proved false. What an awful ass that fellow is to give unnecessary fright !

I have told my patient here that I must reach Delhi on the 1st of March to be in time for your return from Ahmedabad. I hope my patient's condition would be such that it would not prevent me from

coming. In the end, I wish once more to appeal to you and, through you to Mahatmaji, not to sacrifice himself so lightly when there is hardly a chance of any response from, at least, an overwhelming section of the people in India.

With kind regards,

Yours ever
M.A. Ansari

84. From Chouhry Khaliquzzaman

Lucknow
1.3.1930

My dear Dr. Saheb,

I discussed the contents of your letter with Maharaja Saheb, Tasadduq and Shuaib. Every one agreed with me that you had put the case as fairly as possible and every one appreciated the sincerity underlying every word in that letter. The reply of Mahatmaji was no doubt felt by everyone of us to be disappointing. In fact it set every one a thinking. Uptil now we thought Hindu-Muslim unity was the pillar over which the superstructure of the constitution of free India was to be laid, but from Mahatmaji's letter one can infer that while recognising the utility of such a unity he does not consider it *sine qua non* for a fight for independence. If we accept the formula, laid down therein we indirectly proclaim to the Muslim community to find its champions in people who believe that communalism in India is a fact. No one can deny that in time to come nationalism would grow and envelop every one of its sons—Hindus and Muslims, but that would certainly require ages. Those who believe in the ultimate unity of communities may as well believe in the ultimate unity of nations, and start with Internationalism rather than with nationalism. However, the least said of that position of Mahatmaji the better for us.

The next question that has to be considered and in which we all seek your guidance is 'what do we do now'. The Congress has shown its cards and the Mahasabha has shown itself. The Muslim communalists are sitting with the Hindu Sabha stalwarts to settle

their disputes. For what one can see, the result is not going to be very promising. Under the circumstances and until then 'what are we to do'. In my humble opinion we must form ourselves into a group belonging to the Congress and believing in the creed of Independence, yet insisting on the Hindu-Muslim unity as a cardinal basis for India's progress. You will find any number of Muslims to subscribe to this view and from what I have seen at Delhi I would not be surprised to find many of those who left us on the Nehru report issue coming back to us in sheer disgust of Sir Shafi and Jinnah's aggressive attitude. I wish I would give you a living picture of what I saw at the All-Parties Conference. After talking platitudes for two days, the conference decided to elect a committee. The Muslim names that you now find were selected at the point of bayonet. Sir Shafi and Jinnah wanted these names and these names had to be accepted. Poor Maharaja's name was dragged in as an eye-wash but I am glad he at once resigned. Politically I feel it is a victory for us. If it is to be a settlement it is obvious Sir Shafi and Jinnah will have to bid farewell to many of their demands before their other demands are, if at all, conceded. However, to come back to the point, we now do want a lead from you. If you consider it necessary, we may all meet together somewhere to consider the new situation in the light of events that have happened since then. Maharaja Saheb will be going to Delhi after the 5th instant and will stay there for a few days. I can come on any Saturday and bring Tasadduq also, to have definite policy before to guide us.

The League Council practically did nothing beyond the announcement of the fact that the Shafi League is broken up and that its members are present. If we had all our members present we could have put some obstacles to this but we had to swallow this because the number of members present was not evenly balanced on our side. The next meeting is fixed for the 24th instant at Delhi. We have to decide finally about our attitude towards this institution.

As for Mahatmaji's civil disobedience programme, to tell you the truth, I have not been able to understand it, much less appreciate it. I am very glad you have made your position clear in the matter. No one can now say that you forsake them when the time came. From the time of breaking up with the Viceroy you have been consistently making it clear to the Working Committee that you did not agree with the programme of the Congress, but the Working Committee somehow does not see its way to change its course. Let us hope we are false prophets, but to all intents and purposes the course adopted

is doomed to failure. One may say that all activity is not calculated to bring immediate victory, but to this one can equally reply that then time is not of the essence. You could have as well waited and seen the result of the labours of those who believed in Round Table Conferences. Mahatmaji is sadly optimistic and we shall have to reap its consequences.

Now turning to your complaint of not having replied to your letter I can only say that at least this time the charge is not quite rightly made against me. On the receipt of your first letter I at once rushed to Maharaja Saheb and discussed the whole thing with him. This was on the 20th February in the evening. On my return from there I at once phoned Delhi to find out if you were there. I was informed that you might come on the 23rd for a day if possible. I therefore thought it would not be proper to write to you to Jaora but that I should meet you personally. So I made up my mind to reach Delhi on the 22nd morning. From the papers I learnt that the date of the meeting had been changed from the 23rd to 28th February. I therefore decided to meet you at Delhi on the 26th. I reached there on the 26th and have arrived back here today to find your letter waiting for me. What place you occupy in my heart is known only to God. Suffice it to say that you are at once my pride and my joy. You are a brother, a friend and leader to me. I adore you, worship you and love you. Your place is your own. No one in this life can dislodge you from my mind. In this life I have been fortunate only in one respect *i.e.* friends. Life itself would be barren without you. You are my prize. Many would wish to be there where I am. Even from a purely selfish point of view I would fight to the last for the place which I occupy.

You are right when you say that I stood for the Assembly in spite of my promises not to do so and that too without informing you of my intentions. The only apology that I can offer is the insistence of Maharaja Saheb with whom I tried to the last to argue to let me retire. I deposited my money at the last moment under sheer compulsion.¹ This reason can only diminish my guilt but I know it cannot

¹In his *Pathway to Pakistan*, however, Khaliquzzaman offered a different explanation. 'As I was opposed to the Congress decision' (asking the members of the Central Assembly to resign), he wrote, 'I decided to contest the seat... I was firmly of the view that with Muslims sulking and not having faith in the Congress policy, any fight for independence was a colossal blunder'. C. Khaliquzzaman, *Pathway to Pakistan*, (Lahore, 1961), p. 105.

exonerate me from the charge. I however rely more on your generosity than on my reasons. I trust you will forgive me and never mention this to me again. I am sorry and you should forgive.

Yours affectionately,
Khaliq

85. From T.A.K Sherwani

Allahabad
3.3.1930

My dear Ansari,

Yours of the 24th was received by me yesterday on my return from Delhi. I had left for Delhi on the 25th and stopped there till 1st. I was sure to meet you but on the 1st I was told that you were not coming back even for the *Idd*. I had a lot to talk to you.

I agree with every word you had said in your letter to the Mahatma. But his letter to you in reply is most disappointing; it shows utter indifference to the feelings of those who stood by him in his movement just like soldiers. I tell you I went to Delhi very much vexed and with an idea to make up with the people of my own community but I frankly admit that I have returned with a feeling of remorse. I consider it absolutely impossible to work with these fellows. Jinnah seems to be so much elated and acts like a dictator. His arrogance coupled with Shafi's sneaky methods make the whole atmosphere disgusting. They are trying to exclude not only us but men like Maharaja Saheb and Ali Imam also. They are trying from now to take their own underlings to the Round Table Conference and assert openly that the time has shown unmistakably who are the real representatives of the Muslims.

In the meeting of the League they had the majority of those present although our written notes would have neutralized their majority so far as electors were concerned but we were not quite sure of our victory.

Only two resolutions were passed:

- (1) Amalgamation of the two Leagues.
- (2) Welcoming the Sapru Conference. The rest of the items [were] postponed for 14th of March when another meeting will be held.

We must meet and decide our future course of action. I would have preferred a policy of 'wait and see' but can we adopt that policy under the present circumstances. In the conference also Jinnah and Shafi were all in all and selected their own man. Maharaja protested against it in spite of our council. Thereupon they took him but he refused to serve and tendered his written resignation and left the meeting. Next day they showed their utmost magnanimity and included your name also. My attitude throughout was that we want settlement and will help in the settlement as much as we can but from outside. The resolution which has been adopted at the conference makes it practically impossible for us to take part in the committee. I wanted to see Sir Tej and discuss the matter with him but could not do so as his mother is very ill. However, let us meet somewhere and decide once for all our attitude towards the coming events. When will you return from Jaora? I was so really pleased to see Harold in Delhi. He has grown fine.

With love,

Yours sincerely,
Tasadduq

86. Statement

Delhi
1930

I have been urged by numerous friends to break the silence I had imposed on myself since my retirement from the Congress Executive¹ due to my differences with the policy and programme adopted at the Lahore session of the Congress.² I must state, however, that in spite of the differences the confidence which my colleagues in the Congress Working Committee still reposed in me, gave me many opportunities to place my views before them. I have fully availed myself of this advantage on several important occasions.

¹In 1930 Ansari resigned from the membership of the Delhi Provincial Congress Committee and the membership of the Provincial Executive, and refused the General Secretaryship and membership of the Congress Working Committee.

²The Lahore session of the Indian National Congress was held in December 1929.

Briefly stated, my contentions were that the Congress should have fully utilised the peace offer made by the Viceroy; that it should not have closed the door against further negotiations by changing the Congress creed and that it should not have declared war by calling the country to launch upon a campaign of mass civil disobedience.³ Further it should not have shelved the solution of the minority question. My reasons for holding these views were that we were not ready for a countrywide mass movement of this nature; that there were great chances of the non-violent campaign being submerged by breaking out of violence and lastly, that the only sanction necessary for the success of a non-violent campaign, *i.e.*, Hindu-Muslim-Sikh unity, was wanting.⁴

Having had unique opportunities of making intimate study of this question for a number of years, I felt convinced that in spite of the apparently formidable obstacles in the way, it was within practical possibility at that time to achieve it, if another concerted and earnest effort was made in that direction. The settlement of this question would have given us unique position and power both in the country and outside. It would have been impossible to withstand a united demand made on behalf of every section of the people of India at the Round Table Conference. In the eventuality, however, of such a demand having been turned down, a campaign of independence started by a united India would have had the moral support of the world public opinion and the combined political and material support of the entire Indian people. These views were placed for the last time before the Working Committee of the Congress, on the very eve of starting the campaign of civil disobedience. They were given full consideration but were not found acceptable.

What followed after the memorable march of Mahatma Gandhi to Dandi for breaking the salt laws is public property.⁵ In the beginning, absence of any interference on the part of the government apparently took the wind out of Mahatma Gandhi's sail. But the movement gathered strength and volume steadily as, forced by the clamour of the British people and the press, the Government of India began to interfere with it. From simple, and in place polite, obstruction in the beginning, the agents of the government gradually adopted harsher methods, which later developed into harassment and wholesale arrests of the leaders and mass assaults on and beating with *lathis* of the rank and

³The civil disobedience campaign was launched on 6 April 1930.

⁴See Ansari to Gandhi, 13 February 1930.

⁵Gandhi began his Dandi march on 12 March 1930.

file of civil resisters. And now it has culminated into black and tan methods of regular frightfulness. The assaults have become most violent, causing some time multiple and serious injuries, the *lathi* play has become merciless, continued sometimes even when the unfortunate victim has fallen down in an unconscious state; there are inhuman and at times indecent treatment reported by reliable eye-witnesses; innumerable cases of belabouring of passers-by or innocent spectators including women and children have been authentically reported; shooting down gatherings of peaceful people with least provocation, often without any warning or with insufficient warning, is being generally resorted to; rule by promulgation of emergency laws, rule by ordinances and rule by martial law, are becoming normal. All the time the spirit of resistance shown by people all over the country and their adherence to non-violence, often in the face of gravest provocation, has been beyond all expectations. Sporadic cases of violence on the part of the people, most reprehensible though they were undoubtedly, have been rare. The latest communique issued by the Government of India, declaring the Congress Working Committee, an unlawful body and arresting the President and General Secretary of the Congress, contains a confession by the government of the campaign of civil disobedience having completely succeeded in its objects. It is also an evidence of the mastery of the forces of reaction in the Council of the Viceroy, over those of sober and clear-sighted statesmanship.

The recommendations of the Simon Commission, though not altogether unexpected, have shocked entire India by their unabashed retrograde character and their open reactionary nature. There has been a well deserved chorus of general condemnation from every section of the people. No one is prepared to touch them even with a pair of tongs. Even the easy-going loyalist has been rudely shaken out of his complacent and blind loyalty.

The band of the faithful which had fore-gathered under the banner of the spiritual leader at Delhi, and had laboured to lay deep the foundations of a constitutional paradise for the Muslim minority, has been sadly disillusioned.⁶ It had spurned even to enter paradise with

⁶The Muslim response to the publication of the Report was one of annoyance and exasperation. On 5 July 1930, the Executive Board of the All-India Muslim Conference described the Report as 'unacceptable to the Mussulmans of India' and 'retrograde and reactionary in spirit'. This was because the Report did not recommend the separation of Sind from the Bombay Presidency and the introduction of Reforms in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. The Report also displayed an unsympathetic attitude towards separate representation.

the help of its brown neighbours, for it was promised a higher heaven by the alien, white, arch-angel Gabriel. But to its utter discomfiture, it finds itself trapped in a veritable inferno. Well may it declaim in contrition. "This is lost, as well as that." Even the fourteen points emphasised as indispensable for the emancipation of his people by the Muslim Woodrow Wilson, have been completely ignored by the Simon-Seven. False leadership has led Muslims into a sad plight. Let us hope the hard lesson would make them set their faces in the right direction and in future they would place greater reliance in themselves and in the good faith of their countrymen rather than in the intervention of the interested third party to safeguard their rights.

To me the future does not appear as dark and gloomy as painted by some. It is obvious that today the power and prestige of the government have reached the lowest watermark; that the people of India have been stirred to the depths by the nationwide struggle for freedom; that "resolute government" has failed to crush their spirits; that the methods of frightfulness carried by the agents of the government have produced a very widespread sympathy with the sufferer even in circles opposed to the policy and programme of the Congress; and that, therefore, sooner or later the government would feel obliged to change its present policy and resort to methods of conciliation. In my humble opinion, the government would be well-advised to forthwith give up the policy of ruthless repression and make the best use of the offers made in the interviews of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Motilal Nehru, and set the hands of the clock forward instead of keeping it back.

Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari

87. From M.K. Gandhi

Sabarmati
3.3.1930

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I have your message. It does not move me. I want you to read my letter to the Viceroy with an unbiased mind¹. You seem to have

¹See Gandhi to Irwin, 2 March 1930, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 43, pp. 2-8.

made up your mind that the Independence Resolution is wrong and that Civil Disobedience—its corollary is also wrong *i.e.* at the present moment. You will find neither to be wrong. We cannot achieve unity through any Conference. But, we can through fighting for common causes. At the time of the flood in Gujerat four years ago, all without exception in the flood area made common cause. There was no difficulty about Muslims seeking the same shelter as the Hindus. The blind orthodox Hindu suspended his prejudice against the untouchable. The snake discarded his venom for the time being. True, they are again, 'as you were'. But a few more such lesson will certainly set them right. I want you to realise the new orientation I have given to the struggle. I seek independence through a redress of the age-long grievances which touch the masses more than us. I want you to throw yourself heart and soul into this battle. If your preoccupations prevent you, you must at least give it your blessing. I have small-pox raging in the Ashram. We are most of us anti-vaccinationists from religious motive. No provable virtue of vaccination will therefore move us. If you know of a remedy apart from vaccination, please send me the prescription. The treatment we are having is red colour, strong permanganate solution and warm baths followed by wet sheet pack and liquid food, chiefly fruit juices and when the virulence abates a little, milk and water, but of 12 cases three have proved fatal. Two obstinate cases of confluent small-pox have completely recovered. There is uncertainty about one bad case. We are trying to keep children away from the patients but it is so difficult to isolate patients completely. It is an expensive process if you will not make it heartless and leave the patient practically to his fate. If you have leisure please dictate full instructions.

IDD MUBARAK.

Yours ever,
M.K. Gandhi

88. From Rafi Ahmed Kidwai

Barabanki
4.3.1930

My dear Doctor Saheb,

The absence of our friends from Punjab and Bengal reduced us to a minority in the Muslim League. However, still we were twelve and the

other party was not sure the monies we had in our pockets would give us the majority. The only business therefore transacted was a declaration that the rival league has been dissolved. The next meeting comes off on 14th. In the last we had to spend only Rs. 100 on Bihar and about Rs. 30 on telegrams. I have got Rs. 35 with me left out of Rs. 150 taken from Basit. It is for you to decide whether we should attend on 14th. On hearing from you the necessary arrangements shall be made.

Yours truly,
Rafi

89. To T. B. Sapro

Delhi
8.3.1930

Dear Dr. Sapro,

May I heartily thank you and your Committee for your kind invitation to me to participate in proceedings. While, however, appreciating the honour that has been done to me, I cannot, I fear, identify myself with it so long as I remain a member of the Congress.

I need hardly assure you that this does not imply any lack of sympathy for attempts to bring about inter-communal unity—a consummation which I pray for far more devoutly than for anything else. You have, therefore, my sincerest good wishes for your efforts.

Yours sincerely,
M. A. Ansari

90. From Choudhry Khaliquzzaman

Lucknow
8.3.1930

My dear Dr. Saheb,

After I had a talk with you on the phone I met Maharaja Saheb and

asked him for some money for the work. But the answer was disappointing. He has however promised to approach a few gentlemen for it. That means delay. How can we do any work under the circumstances. The consequences of this will be fatal.

I spoke to you about my matter. The Government I am told, desires to have a Muslim from service and in the alternative a Christian gentleman. Mr. Patel¹ also, I am informed, favours a Christian. If Mr. Patel seriously contemplates this he might as well let you know finally so that I may not go for the interview. I feel I have already suffered enough on account of this and Mr. Patel would do me a favour by letting me even now know what he proposes to do. As regards his objection to my reading the address (which fact he mentioned to Pt. Motilalji) I am afraid he forgets that he is in no better position than myself. I shall be highly obliged to you if you would kindly make it a point to talk over the matter with him and get a final answer if possible so that I may decide about my future plans. Do write to me about your impressions of his conversation and advice in the matter.

How long are you going to stay at Jaora during this visit?

I may have to go to Bombay in the Nanpara case for a few days this month. On my way back I may come to Delhi if you are there.

Maharaja Saheb is going to Bombay today. I hope he would require you at Bombay. Let us hope we shall meet there.

When is Ahmed going to Mussoorie?

Yours affectionately,
Khaliq

¹Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950); entered public life in 1916 as an associate of Gandhi who had established his Satyagraha Ashram at Ahmedabad; came into prominence as a satyagraha leader first at Kaira and then in the Nagpur National Flag Agitation, and in the Bardoli no-tax campaign; elected President of the Municipality in 1924 and continued up to 1928 when he left Ahmedabad for Bardoli; president, Indian National Congress, 1931; took part in the individual satyagraha, 1941, and the Quit India Movement, 1942. In the Interim Government, he served as Home Minister and, after independence, he was made Deputy-Prime Minister of India.

91. To Mohammad Ali Mohammad, Maharaja of Mahmudabad*

Delhi
11.4.1930

My dear Maharaja Saheb,

I was hoping to have met you either in Delhi or in Bombay, during February and March. But, the sister of the Nawab of Jaora, a very old patient of mine, got seriously ill and I promised to see her through this illness, which I hoped would not be very long. But, it has been protracted beyond all my anticipations. I have, therefore, become a fixture here more or less, until the patient is out of danger.

I have no doubt that Khaliq has posted you up with all my efforts to influence Gandhiji and those who are holding the reins of the Congress today, without success. You have, also, probably read the manifesto issued in the name of the Khilafat Working Committee, but, in reality, written by Mohammad Ali and inspired by Shaukat Ali and Shafi Daoodi, who have got Nehru Report, Hindu Mahasabha and the Congress on their brains. The position of the Nationalist Muslims of our way of thinking, is somewhat difficult. Whilst, on the one hand, we consider the policy and programme of the Congress entirely ill-conceived and detrimental to the larger interests of the country today, we do not consider the campaign of civil disobedience conceived in the spirit of antagonism to the Muslims. I, therefore, feel that we should consult together, and at the earliest opportunity, give an unequivocal and clear statement to remove the misunderstanding, which is being fostered sedulously by the Khilafatists.

But, I am writing this letter to you more for a personal reason. I understand that you are thinking of going to Europe, as advised by me, for treatment, at one of the English or Continental spas. I should very much like to see you before your departure to Europe, in order that I may give you the fullest benefit of my various experiences regarding the medical assistance, to be derived during your stay there. But, I am not certain of my movements yet. I am trying to get away from here about the middle of this month for a few days to Bhopal,

*For permission to include this letter, the editor is grateful to Maharajkumar Mohammad Amir Hyder Khan of Mahmudabad.

and then to Lucknow and Rampur. I would let you know by telegram of the exact date of my arrival in Lucknow when I leave here.

One thing (and that a very important) I wish to write to you about, and that is regarding Iftikhar Ali. I know him very intimately. He is a very hard-working, honest and straight-forward man. He has done business in Paris for a number of years and is well acquainted with the Continental life. He has a perfect command of the French language and, also, knows German fairly well. He would make, in my opinion, an ideal companion during your stay in Europe. I strongly advise you to use his services, for I do not think you can conceivably secure a better man. I would, also, suggest, if it is possible, to induce Choudhry Khaliquzzaman, to go with you. For, not only would he be a very cheerful and interesting companion to you, but he would be able to assist you in your political work which, I am sure, you would be called upon to do during your stay in England.

I do hope that your digestion and heart trouble are both better and that I would be able to have another look at you soon.

With kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

92. To V.J. Patel¹

Delhi
29.5.1930

My dear Patel,

Yesterday, in spite of our shouting at each other, I do not believe either of us was able to learn what the other had to say.

I wish to briefly tell you what I wanted to convey to you on the telephone. Panditji, asked me on the 26th, if I would go to Rawalpindi, as a member of the Congress Enquiry Committee (regarding the Peshawar incidents).² Although, the day previous I had operated on

¹Vithalbhai Jahverbhai Patel (1873-1933); elected to Bombay Assembly 1912; represented Indian National Congress at the London Conference on the Government of India Act, 1919.

²The Peshawar riots started on the 23rd April 1930 and continued for the next few days.

my elder brother for Diabetic gangarine of the foot, and although as the only surviving relation and a friend of Shuaib Qureshi's, I had to make all the arrangements in connection with his wedding (which is taking place today and tomorrow), I felt I could not refuse Panditji. I agreed to go to Pindi (leaving Delhi on the 31st May and reaching there in the afternoon of the 1st June), provided my brother's condition would permit and I was in a position to entrust attendance on him to another doctor. The wedding would be finished on the morning of the 31st May, but I am afraid, my brother's condition is still grave. The gangarine has not stopped progressing. He is suffering from continuous acute pains and his temperature is maintained quite high. In this condition, I wish to tell you that with the best of intentions, unless my brother's condition improves, it would not be possible for me to leave. If, however, his condition is satisfactory, I would leave as arranged. I hope you would not misunderstand me and think I am making an excuse to get out of the Committee. I hope you know me well enough not to think like that, but unfortunately when opinions differ the best of friends are liable to misunderstand and misjudge each other. I hope you know me well enough to believe that whatever my differences with the Congress, I shall never shirk rendering whatever assistance lies in my power, consistent with my convictions and further I hope, you know that, though my head may not be with the present policy and programme of the Congress, my heart has been and will always be with them.

Trusting this will find you well.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

93. Circular

Delhi
7.7.1930

The Simon Commission Report is out and leaders of different shades of opinion, have expressed their views on the recommendations. Some of the Muslim associations and leaders have also given out their views. It seems from their opinions so far gathered, that no

Muslim Association has tried to look at the recommendations from the nationalist point of view. The matter is of such vital importance both to the community and the country, that I think you would agree with me that a conference of Nationalist Muslims should be held at an early date, to express the nationalist Muslim India's mind about the Report and its recommendations. It is proposed that we should meet at Lucknow on the 20th July, at Gangaprasad Memorial Hall, to deliberate on the matter. I hope you would kindly consent to allow your name to be mentioned as one of the signatories for the calling of the conference. I have tried to obtain consent of friends from every part of India who subscribe to the nationalist view.

A telegraphic reply will very much oblige as the time at our disposal is short.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

94. From Mujibur Rahman

Calcutta
9.7.1930

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 5th instant. I have already wired to you saying that I have no objection to subscribing my name to the invitation letter. But I must tell you that I hesitate to do so because I shall not probably be able to attend the conference of Nationalist Muslims that you are going to convene. If this letter reaches you before the issue of the invitation letter you may then consider whether it would be proper under the circumstances to make me a signatory. I, however, do not think that it would be quite proper to do so.

I send herewith a copy of the *Mussalman* containing the full text of the speech recently delivered by Sir Abdur Rahim as President of the Bihar Muslim Conference.¹ You will find that the Simon Report has

¹This was held on 28 April 1930 at Patna.

been discussed by him not from the viewpoint of a communalist Muslim but from that of a moderate Nationalist. I send you the paper because the full text of the speech has not, so far as I know, appeared in any other newspaper.

Hoping you are keeping well.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
Mujibur Rahman

95. From N.A.K. Sherwani¹

Aligarh
10.7.1930

~~My dear~~ Doctor Saheb,

Your letter of the 7th has just reached me. I quite welcome the idea of calling a Muslim Nationalists Conference and you are quite welcome to add my name as a signatory. I showed your letter to Mr. Sarwar Hasan, Barrister, a Nationalist Muslim, and he also welcomes the idea and is willing to have his name added as a signatory.

Yours sincerely,
Nisar Ahmad Khan Sherwani

¹Nisar Ahmad Khan Sherwani belonged to a zamindar family of U P. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly and was appointed Minister of Agriculture. He died in 1951.

96. From Vallabhbhai Patel

Ahmedabad
13.7.1930

My dear Dr. Ansari,

You know that Panditji has appointed me his successor and I have taken up the responsibility as desired by him. Unfortunately we could

not meet as he was arrested almost immediately after I came out.¹ I do not know whether you were in touch with Panditji during the period of his being in sole charge of the present movement after Mahatmaji's arrest. But when the Working Committee is declared illegal and the President and the Secretary have been arrested, I feel it my duty to approach you for your co-operation and assistance. I have no doubt that if you will once more take your original place in the Working Committee, the Congress will be greatly strengthened and you will be rendering a very great service to the Nation in its hour of need. I have been feeling your absence from the Committee at every step.

If you think that any personal discussion is necessary I would run down to you at any time you suggest, but I trust you will give your best consideration to my request.

Yours sincerely,
Vallabhbhai Patel

¹Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on April 14 while entraining from Allahabad for Raipur. He remained in the Naini Central Prison, with an eight-day freedom, until January 26, 1931.

7. From Syed Ali Imam¹

Patna
13.7.1930

My dear Mukhtar,

Perhaps you are not aware that I was taken very seriously ill last April and was for three months under treatment at Ranchi. I have not quite recovered yet though I am much better. In the circumstances, I am not allowed to undertake long journeys or put myself under any strain. Much as I would have wished to attend the Lucknow Meeting on the 20th, I am unable to do so. Your wire from Simla has just reached me and I hasten to explain to you my inability.

¹1869-1932; called to the Bar, 1890; member of the Viceroy's Council, 1910-15; judge of the Patna High Court, 1917; president of the Nizam's Executive Council, 1919-22.

I wish the Meeting every success. To me it is perfectly clear that the salvation of Indian Muslims is in pure Indian nationalism free from any the least tinge of communalism.

Best regards,
Yours affectionately,
S. Ali Imam

98. From Mangal Singh¹

Lahore
14.8.1930

My dear Doctor Saheb,

~~Let me~~ heartily congratulate you on your recent decision to take full part in the Congress activities at a time when the Government is determined to crush it in spite of your differences with the present programme and policy of the Congress. This decision is fully in keeping with the eminent public position you occupy in the public life of the country.

Owing to certain urgent private reasons I, too, have so far been unable to take full part in Congress activities. But now, as you say, that the Government has resolved to paralyse the Congress, no true Indian can afford to sit aside with equanimity. I have, therefore, offered my humble services to the acting president of the Indian National Congress. Will you please forward this letter to him.

You will be glad to know that the Sikhs are taking full part in the Congress fight for freedom. As a matter of fact in most of the towns they alone are carrying on the fight. But we feel that your and Maulana's visit to this province will help the movement as it is very necessary that Muslims should be persuaded to take more share in the National movement. I hope you will consider the matter fully and sympathetically. We are afraid that Sukkur communal riots may not affect our province. Your visit will remove this apprehension. I have sounded a timely note of warning.

With regards,

Yours very sincerely,
Mangal Singh

¹Sardar Mangal Singh (b. 1892) was one of the leaders of the Akali movement.

99. To Mangal Singh

16.8.1930

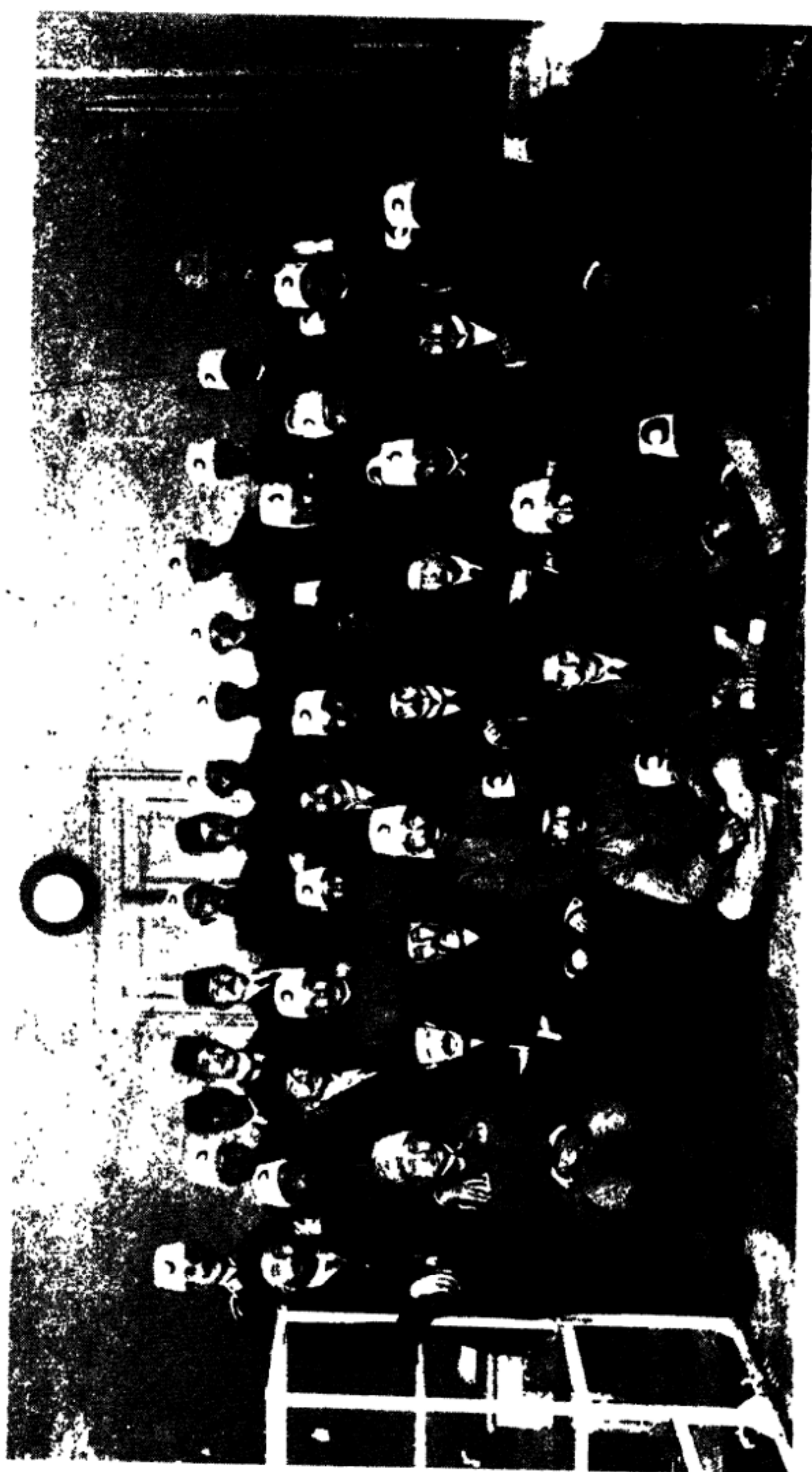
My dear Sardar Mangal Singh,

Many thanks for your letter of 14th of August and the kind words used in it for me.

I have forwarded your letter to the Acting-President of the Congress at 3A, Store Road, Bally Ganj, Calcutta, but I am not sure if it will reach his hands, for, on the occasion of the last Muslim Nationalist Party meeting at Lucknow, I sent him several letters and telegrams, none of which reached his hands. Evidently, his letters are being censored. The best method of approaching him for safety's sake will be to hand over copies of your letter to the Associated Press and the Free Press and the Maulana is bound to read them.

I am glad to hear that the Sikhs are gradually joining the Congress. I am watching this very carefully, and I find that like the Muslims, their number is also gradually increasing. But, you will agree with me that much is still left to be done, and the Sikhs and the Muslims have yet to come in larger and larger numbers. Our efforts must be directed to this end and, with courage and determination, I feel certain we shall be able to bring them round to see where the true interests lie. I do not expect that the troubles at Sukkur are likely to spread. I have heard from the son of Maulvi Abdul Qadir, as also from Mr. Afzalul Haq, and others that there is no likelihood of the Sukkur poison entering into the Punjab. We should do our very best to stop this.

I am afraid I am not in a position to go round on a tour just yet. You perhaps do not know that, after a prolonged illness, my elder brother passed away last week. He was suffering from Diabetes and a big boil in his heel developed to such an extent that we were forced to amputate his foot a few inches below the knee. He was 62 years of age and could not stand the shock of the operation. It was his continued illness for the last four months that delayed my decision to join the Working Committee, otherwise I would have been there long ago. The widow of my brother and other relations are still in the house and there are certain private affairs, consequent upon the sad event, which will not allow me to leave Delhi for a very long period.



Dr. M A Ansari in Constantinople as leader of the Indian Mission.

However, if there is any special meeting in any place I may be able to run up for a day or so and render any assistance I can.

I hope you are quite well.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

100. To Shaukatullah Ansari*

Delhi
28.9.1931

My dearest Shaukoo,

~~Ever~~ since my release from jail at the end of last January, I have been kept in a whirlpool of political excitement and it is only for the last three weeks, since the departure of the Mahatma for England that I have been allowed to do my professional work and live my normal life. But even now the Mahatma is harking back on me and wanting me even at this eleventh hour to be invited to the Round Table Conference in London. It is like a little baby crying for his wet-nurse. I am positive that the Government has deliberately left the Nationalist Muslim Party unrepresented at the Round Table Conference, because they do not want the Hindu-Muslim question to be settled without their intervention. And they know that if there is any party in India which can bring about Hindu-Muslim Unity it is the Nationalist Muslim Party. It is, therefore, against their interest to have the representatives of that party at the Round Table Conference, for they would be able to cement the unity of the various parties in India and thus deprive the Government from playing their trump card against the representatives of India who are pressing hard for complete freedom from the British tutelage. That is the reason why I have been deliberately excluded from being invited to participate at the Round Table Conference and that is why in spite of every effort on the part of Mahatma I am sure I would never be invited. So you need not worry yourself about my coming to England.

I must congratulate you heartily on your recent success. You must

*For permission to publish this letter, the editor is grateful to Mrs. Zohra Ansari,

however, try to pass the Honours Examination in October. You can hardly realise the tremendous difficulties which beset me in supporting you and sending your monthly allowance regularly. I would at all costs go on doing so and see that you complete your studies there. I would also like you, when you have passed your final examination, to go to London for six months and take the diploma of the Royal College of Surgeons and Physicians, because otherwise you may have some difficulties in practising your profession here in India.

I am thinking of bringing my son, Ahmed Harold, to Europe next summer in order to put him in English public school there. I shall then be able to spend a little time with you either in Paris or some other place.

Your aunt and Zohra send their love and regards to you. All are doing well here. Give my love and regards to Dr. Wahby & Raoof Bey.

Yours affectionate and devoted Uncle,
M.A. Ansari

101. To T.A.K. Sherwani

Beau-Rivage-Palace
Ouchy-Lausanne
30.10.1932

My dear Tasadduq,

Your letter dated 20th inst. reached me in Vienna, on Monday 24th Oct., for obvious reason as though written on 20th, the postmark on the envelope, as Paris, is 22nd. That shows at least that you are otherwise busy. I have written to Shaukoo about my stay in Vienna, which I have asked him to share with you to avoid repetition. I am trying to leave here on the night of the 1st Nov. or morning of 2nd for Paris; but my extreme preoccupations at Vienna, prevented me from making previous arrangements in Switzerland and the intervention of a Sunday, would probably not allow me to finish all my interviews and medical inspections I have planned to do during my stay here.

I feel considerably relieved on hearing the opinion given to you by Dr. Louis Baldenweek, about your ear trouble, that it is chiefly nervous (due to defect in nerves, I don't mean imaginary) and Iodides and nerve-tonics and not local treatment, is indicated. This has removed a great weight off my mind, as it is the most curable form of ear trouble and treatment would be simple and most efficacious. I think on the strength of such good news you ought to stand us all a good treat. So cheer up, old buck, life is not so gloomy for you and me, we will still be able to do some good for our beloved, benighted land-of-birth before we kick the bucket.

I have got last week's weekly letter of Harris, with cuttings and this week's which has just arrived. There is also a letter from Khaliq, with letters written on 9th and 24 Sept. and not posted. That's just like him. They would all be so bulky that it is difficult to send them all, besides I have not yet commenced reading this week's so I would either post these to you tomorrow or bring them along when I come, but old news becomes stale and difficult to read. I, however, find from Khaliq's letter that he has also written to you.

After the brilliant, all-absorbing, time at Vienna, I find it deadly dull here. I am all alone in my room in the hotel and don't know a soul and don't know what to do with myself. There is limit even to reading books and writing letters and sight-seeing is loathsome all by yourself. I think I will take train to Montana and see if I can catch old Prof. Stephan over there.

I am glad you have got over your cold, also that Behdjet Wahby is now more accessible to you than on your arrival. Have you read the list of Round-tablers? What a crew? Yes, I was almost forgetting to write something important. In view of the stiff-necked attitude of the Wellington-House Combine, regarding Congress and Mahatma, I wonder if it would be advisable on our part to go to

London just when the

من ترا حاجی بگویم تو مرا حاجی بگو

Company assembles there. It may be misrepresented and abused. But on the whole, I think our shoulders are broad enough to carry this fresh canard, as many a previous one. So I think we had better stick

to our programme. I had forgotten all about English (language) sickness at Vienna, but it has come back again. *Au revoir*, till we meet.

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

P.S. Please hand over the enclosed to Shaukoo. There is also one for you.

M.A.A.

102. To Aziz Ansari¹

Artillery Mansions Hotel
Westminster
10.11.1932

My dear Ajjoo,

I am grateful to you for your letter dated 19th October. For a wonder, you have started taking some interest in politics. Miracles do happen in even the twentieth century.

After finishing my cure at Bed Neuheim, I spent a most enjoyable and educative week at Vienna. Through the kindness of Professor Schlesinger I got entree into the most select Viennese Society of University Professors, literary, scientific, artistic people of Vienna. I visited hospitals, laboratories, art salons, operas, music and painting academies and in fact had a thoroughly enjoyable time. The professors there have asked me to visit Vienna again and give a series of lectures on my experiences in genitourinary work. The great Professor Stinach, the greatest savant and the world-famous biologist, the discoverer of the basis of rejuvenation, was very highly complimentary when I briefly told him of my humble work in that department. He told me that of all the hundreds of persons working in that field whom he had met, my own series of cases were most varied and covered all

¹Aziz Ansari (b.1889); a cousin of Dr. M.A. Ansari; contemporary of Abdur Rahman Siddiqi and Khaliquzzaman at Aligarh; member of the Indian Medical Mission to Turkey; active in the Khilafat movement and was jailed in 1921; member of the Nationalist Muslim Party.

the different variations of the technique of methods practised by rejuvenation. He urged me to publish my researches and not to hide my light under the bushel. Much encouraged by him, I am at present engaged in putting together five per cent of the total number of patients I have treated by the various methods, into a small monograph and publishing it in book form. As you know, my preoccupations if I don't do it now, it will never be done.

How I wish either you or I or both combined together could afford to give Hafiz three or four years post-graduate training in Vienna. He would only require 250 rupees a month and it would make a fine surgeon of him, an art in which, I understand he has natural aptitude.

With all my love,

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

103. From M.K. Gandhi¹

22.12.1932

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am so glad you were able to send me that long letter of 1st instant. We were all looking forward to a detailed letter from you. Sherwani must have already left for India. Western medicines and surgery seem to be becoming a very complicated and costly affair. The fewest men and women can get the whole benefit of it, and a change from one expert to another. It seems to me that there must be something radically wrong in the system which daily tends to become more and more costly, and split into compartments, each one of which requires a specialist. I suppose you have a complete and conclusive answer to my objection. I have stated it in order to coax you. You may give me your considered answer when you have ample leisure. Any way, I do not want you to return to India till you are completely restored,

¹Gandhi wrote this letter from the Yervada Central Prison. He was arrested on January 4, 1932 in Bombay under Regulation No. 25 of 1827. He was released on 23 August following a 102 days fast for 'self purification'.

and now that you are there, I do not care if you have to go to 100 experts to have all the parts of body fully restored.

It is a great thing for you to have hardened your heart and resisted all temptations to attend public functions and meetings.

Of course I know your devotion to your profession and am glad that you will soon complete an original treatise on rejuvenation. We all wish you success in your work.

Please remember me to Shuaib and Shaukat Ali if the latter is there. Zohra and I correspond with each other regularly.² You may discount her abilities as a teacher. For me she is an ideal teacher. She takes great pains over correcting my Urdu, and her handwriting has never been excelled by a single correspondent of mine in Urdu. I look forward to her weekly letter. I like her composition also, but as to that, I can be no judge. Love from us all.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi

²See Gandhi to Zohra Banu Ansari, 7 July 1932, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 50, p. 165; *Ibid.*, 3 October 1932, *Ibid.*, pp. 185-6.

104. To T.B. Sapro

Delhi
26.2.1933

My dear Sir Tej Bahadur,

I am grateful to you for your kind letter of warm welcome, which I found on my arrival home on 14th instant. I am sorry I have not been able to write to you earlier but it has been physically impossible owing to the rush of work as well as visitors and the daily load of letters and telegrams.

When leaving London on 13th Dec., I telephoned several times to you but you were not available. I then left a message for you, as well as an invitation to spend a quiet weekend with me at my hiding place at Iorquay. I do not know if it was ever delivered to you. Then I read in the papers of your conference having been suddenly wound up and your having left England.

Thanks very much for your inquiry regarding my health. It is better but not quite all right. I have decided to lead a quiet and unexciting life in future and visit Bad Neuheim; for the treatment of my heart trouble, for three or four years consecutively. I hope to get a complete cure in this manner.

You met in London my esteemed friend, H.E. Husein Raouf Bey, first President of the Angora National Assembly and ex-Prime Minister of Turkey. He has come to India on a tour of sightseeing and is delivering a course of four lectures (on 2nd, 4th, 6th and 8th March) at Jamia Millia (National Muslim University), Delhi. It is our desire that a distinguished Indian should preside at each of these lectures. I have been authorised on behalf of Jamia Millia, to request you to preside over one of the three lectures, the first and the inaugural lecture is being presided over by me as the Chancellor of the Jamia. I hope and desire that you would accede to our request and consent to preside over one of these lectures. Of course the choice is entirely yours but perhaps 4th March, being a Saturday, would suit you best. The time for the lectures is 7.30 p.m. and we are expecting a large and distinguished gathering both from Delhi and outside. With best wishes and kind regards.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

P.S. Of course you would be my guest during your stay. Husein Raouf Bey is also staying with me.

M.A. Ansari

105. From T.B. Saprú

Allahabad
27.2.1933

My dear Doctor Saheb,

I am much obliged to you for your very kind telegram asking me to come up to Delhi and to preside over one of the meetings which are being addressed at the Jamia Millia by H.E. Raouf Bey, the

distinguished Turkish statesman, who is at present travelling in India. While thanking you for the honour I am sorry that I cannot come as last night a young nephew of mine died suddenly and it will not be possible for me to leave Allahabad for the next few days after which I must go out to keep another pressing but prior engagement.

I am sure you will not mind associating me with yourself and your colleagues in extending a hearty welcome to this great Turkish patriot and statesman whom I had the privilege of meeting a few months ago in London. When a few years ago I travelled in Turkey I came back with a very keen sense of admiration for that country and the driving force of its statesmen. I could see during my stay there how a nation, which was supposed to be dead, could by its own exertions and adaptability to the needs of the time revive itself and recover a position of respect and equality among the nations of the world. My interest in Turkey, though of long standing, has ever since my visit been intensified and as far as possible I follow with great interest and admiration the progress that is being made there in every department of life. I confess that I have a great admiration for its great President but that does not prevent me from recognising the great work of its other patriots, such as your distinguished guest, and the fine spirit of patriotism which all of them have shown on some of the most trying occasions in their history. The Turks, according to my impression, are essentially practical minded people and have very little regard for mere theories.

Another lesson which I have derived from my visit to Turkey and my study of its affairs is that Turkey has realised the supreme importance of adapting herself to the needs of the times and she has refused to allow her traditional past to hang round her neck like a mill-stone. Turkey has many lessons to teach us—both Hindus and Muslims—and I should very much like many of those among our countrymen who either are nationalists, or profess to be nationalists, to include a visit to Turkey in their programme when they go out of the country. I am sure no one can go there in these days and fail to bring with him the lesson that the basis of all progress must be a spirit of broad-based toleration. The honour and glory of Turkey is all the greater because her sons and daughters have, in my opinion, shown in an unmistakable fashion that a nation which aspires to greatness in modern times must fulfil modern conditions.

I shall, therefore, earnestly request you to associate me with yourself in any tribute that you may pay through H.E. Rauf Bey to his great country.

Assuring you of my inability to come over there in response to your kind invitation.

I remain,
Yours sincerely,
T.B. Sapro

P.S. Since the above was dictated by me, I have received your letter of the 26th February. I do not think I need add anything more.

106. To T.B. Sapro

Delhi
25.3.1933

My dear Dr. Sapro,

I feel somewhat taken aback by events which have developed since yesterday afternoon, regarding my intended visit to Benares. The Nawab of Rampur, who as you know is a very old patient of mine, (I have been looking after him since he was a boy of eight) developed a rash yesterday which looks like small-pox. I have been called to see him at least about a dozen times since and he simply would not hear of my leaving him and going to Benares. I have tried to explain to him but it has proved futile. And it would be breach of professional ethics on my part to leave him when he needs me. It is a great disappointment to me to be disabled from attending this meeting but it is impossible. Under the circumstances, I have asked Asaf Ali, who holds identical views with myself and with whom I have discussed the matter thoroughly, to deputise for me. He is also not well, but he is going in spite of his pain in the chest, owing to my pressure. I hope some definite good would emerge out of this Conference.

With kindest regards and a thousand apologies for not turning up as promised.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

107. To A.M. Khwaja*

2.5.1933

My dear Khwaja,

You are fully aware of the tremendous difficulties and the untold hardships which the Jamia has gone through since 1930 after my going to jail. The Hyderabad grant which was just about to be started was stopped and the grant from Bhopal was also stopped. You along with Zakir, tried your best to intervene but failed. You can imagine in absence of even the meagre allowances given to the teachers of Jamia how poor and destitute and half-starved they must be. It is really pitiable to see their plight and yet like brave fellows they are going on. Now, however, there is a chance of re-starting both the Hyderabad and Bhopal grants if only we would put in all our best efforts.

The Chief Commissioner of Delhi has after interviews with Dr. Zakir Husain sent his recommendations to Hyderabad for giving the grant to Jamia. Nawab Zulkadar Jung is now, as you know, the Home Secretary in Hyderabad State. He is very patriotic and a strong man and unlike the former incumbent of the post. And moreover, he would be amenable to our influences more than the ex-Home Secretary. I would therefore request you to immediately write to him a very strong letter and visit Hyderabad during your vacations in order to get this matter finally through. I am sure your writing to Zulkadar and your visit would be quite sufficient. But I am also writing to him and would, if necessary, send Zakir along with you. Now I hope that you would not allow this golden opportunity to miss.

I was hoping to have a talk with you Sunday before last at Aligarh, but you disappeared without any warning and could not be found anywhere. I hope you and Khursheed Begum are getting over the parting with Zohra.

With love to Khursheed Begum, yourself and children.

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

108. To Aziz Ansari*

4.8.1933

My dearest Aziz,

As you see I am writing this letter from the G.I.P. Express train *en route* Bombay. I have been so much rushed since my return from Poona that it is a wonder how I have put up with the terrific strain of professional work in the present state of my health. But the fact that I shall soon be going out for three months change, rest, and treatment, has perhaps helped me to get through the extraordinary strain to which my system has been subjected. I have, however, been several times on the point of absolute collapse. I am, truly thankful to God that He has enabled me to carry out my plans fully and completely. In spite of one month's gap (during which I was away attending the Mahatma at Poona) I am grateful that I have cleared all my pressing liabilities, have provided fully and completely for my two houses at Delhi and Mussoorie and have saved sufficient amount for my journey and treatment in Europe, although with a great deal of care and caution which, as you know, are foreign to my nature.

My programme is that I sail by Lloyd Triestino boat m.v. "Victoria" from Bombay on 7th August. I disembark at Naples on the 17th, spend a few days in finding out everything about a certain Spa there where joint troubles are specially treated by volcanic mud-baths. This investigation I have to make in view of His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal's intended visit there next summer. From there I proceed to Friburg-im-Breisgau (Germany) for two or three weeks cure for joint troubles by deep-ray. From there I go to Bad Nauheim, for a full course of treatment for my heart trouble which may last any time between three to six weeks. After finishing the cure, I have to undertake another visit of investigation on behalf of His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal to another Spa at Pistiani (Czechoslovakia). If time permits I would like to spend a couple of days in Paris and in London before catching my boat m.v. "Victoria", sailing from Genoa on 26th October, reaching Bombay on 5th November and Delhi on 7th. My permanent address during my stay in Europe would be care of Haira Trading Co., Ltd., 66, Mark Lane, London E.C. (telegraphic address, "Siddiquies, London").

*Courtesy : Mr. Aziz Ansari.

I expect Khaliq¹ has kept you posted regarding G.M. as well as the intended arrangement of transplanting you over there in charge of the office. I have insisted that this should be done only when complete understanding and full arrangements have been made. I fear some trouble because of Haider coming to India and Abdur Rahman's weakness for him.

As regards Hafiz, please let him carry on the best he can until my return from Europe when I shall try to fix him up somewhere somehow. I shall expect to hear from you by air mail at least twice a month.

With all my love to you and the children,

Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

¹Choudhry Khaliquzzaman.

109. To Shaukatullah Ansari*

Delhi
9.12.1933

My dearest Shaukoo,

I was glad to get your two tiny letters. They are anyhow better than none. I am, however, expecting the promised detailed letter. I had sent a letter to you from Menton, it has been re-directed here from Bourg-la-Reine. I am again re-directing it.

I have decided definitely to send Harold and his mother to England in March. At first they were very upset and wanted me to go with them but on my showing them the impossibility they agreed to go with Haider and now that Haider's going has become uncertain. I have told them that they must get ready to go from Bombay to Marseilles where you would take charge of them and take them over to London and put them in comfortable and cheap lodgings or boarding and arrange matters about Harris's entrance to Cambridge, Oxford or London University. I would write and tell you later what I have already done for Harris's future education. I expect they would not

*Courtesy : Mrs. Zohra Ansari.

feel happy and confident but would reluctantly agree. You see they have neither of them set foot outside Mussoorie and De!hi, and the prospect of a long journey and a new country is frightening them. I am trying to arrange taking them to Bombay with me in X'mas week just to get them used to a big town and its life. It would be an experience to them both. You know I am presiding at the All-India Medical Conference in Bombay on 23rd-25th December.

From Bombay they would return to Mussoorie and I would go to Hyderabad-Dn. to pay a condolence visit. You know poor Hamid *bhai* died last week of typhoid fever. Your aunt went there and she is there still. We are all alone in the house.

Ever since my return I am working away as hard as ever. I don't get any rest the whole day. I begin by visiting patients at 8 a.m. and go on till 9 p.m. without hardly any break. It is this sort of ceaseless work that is killing me and yet I can't afford to be idle. I have such a load on my shoulders and the responsibilities are increasing instead of diminishing daily. I feel like a hackney horse being driven relentlessly by those who own me to be thrown away like a carrion when I am finished and no work is left in me. It is true, however tragic it may be. I don't get even time for sufficient rest at times. I don't think I would last long at this rate.

I have asked my bankers to instruct their London office to send a draft for £100 to Dr. Behdjet Wahby for his second class return passage to Bombay, as Jamia Millia Extension Lecturer. I hope he would be able to reach India in the middle of January. I am also writing to him to his hotel address.

I hope you would take care of yourself and not allow yourself to catch colds and chill. You know it is quite as necessary to have good health as to receive good education.

All are well here. Zohra is studying hard. Qudsia has just got over another attack of fever. I am afraid the girls get no recreation and now that there is a death in the family, there would be no cinemas for six months or more.

Write soon and answer my letter from Menton.

With my dearest love,
Yours affectionately,
M.A. Ansari

110. From K.F. Nariman¹

Bombay
11.12.1933

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I regret I could not get a full opportunity at Jubbulpore to have a heart-to-heart talk with you to fully explain my position. Hence, I am compelled to send this long communication to you. I am keenly desirous of retaining both the goodwill and good opinion of all my colleagues and leaders and most of all, of you. Hence, I was rather pained to hear your disapproval of my present attitude and activities. I am afraid you had formed a rather hasty judgement on hearing one side, as I had no opportunity to explain my position before you formed an adverse opinion. I will not go into the merits of the issue, because I feel that, you as well as Maulana Saheb, feel as strongly on the present situation as anybody else and have on proper occasions given full expression to your feelings and opinions. The only difference is that I have gone a step further to make humble efforts, according to my capacity, to arrest the present drift, by ending the stalemate, and setting matters right. I am sure you are convinced of the *bona fide* of my object and sincerity of my motives. Personally, the course adopted by me may be detrimental to my future career and may even block my future progress. But that consideration of self, has never deterred me from adopting and pursuing a course, that I am convinced, is right, honest and straight-forward. I regret to have to note that several Congressmen, even of position and status, consciously feel the same as we do, and hold the same opinions, but have not the moral courage to act up to their convictions, either for fear of displeasing Mahatmaji or incurring popular disfavour. You will agree with me that such moral weakness is detrimental both to the cause and the country and ought to be discouraged.

I have also been a strict disciplinarian and my present activities are strictly within the Congress constitution and I further claim that my endeavours are directed to restore the authority, status and prestige of the organisation as above individuals. I am challenging the Poona programme, which is now admitted by all, including Pandit

¹Advocate and Congressman from Bombay. In 1927, he was elected President of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee and led the civil disobedience movement. In 1935, he served as Mayor of the Bombay Corporation.

²Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

Jawaharlal, as unconstitutional. Besides, during my visit to Mahatma Gandhi at Wardha, shortly after my release, I made my position absolutely clear, and informed him in as plain language as it was possible, my differences and also declared my intentions of publicly carrying on propaganda and agitation to restore the Congress from the wrong track to which, according to our honest opinion, it was drifting. Mahatmaji did not only express no objection, but on the contrary, gave definite encouragement in the following words : "I am a democrat of democrats and welcome all criticism and opposition of my political acts." At the time of parting in the presence of many, he even said that I was carrying a power of attorney from him, by which I naturally understood, full liberty of action in future with regard to the subjects discussed by me. After this it is not fair to assail me for my present activities. Besides, these controversial issues were first raised by the General Secretary, Pandit Jawaharlal, when he sarcastically remarked that politics is not magic nor religion but science. Everyone understands that it is a direct hit at the present drift towards theology and spiritualism led by the influence of Mahatma Gandhi. He has also emphasised the difference in his and Mahatmaji's mentalities. I have elaborated these points further and suggested certain remedies which I think under the present abnormal circumstances, are perfectly legitimate and ought to have been welcomed, rather than disapproved.

Besides, as I pointed out to you, Pandit Jawaharlal's present economic policy and programme and his open declaration of class-war and expropriation of property *etc.* is inconsistent with the existing Congress policy as declared and passed, as fundamental rights, in 1931 A.I.C.C. meeting. According to that policy, private property is not only permitted and recognised, but also guaranteed to some extent. That resolution was moved by Pandit Jawaharlal himself and yet today he openly desires to change it and carries on propaganda to get it altered. Whereas I am only challenging the unauthorised statement of Acting-President on the ground that the original W.C. Resolution did not give him any such authority. You will also admit that there is a large section in the Congress, including Working Committee, A.I.C.C., as well as rank and file, who are dissatisfied with the existing state of affairs and desire a change and I am only endeavouring, by all legitimate means, within the Congress, to consolidate that opinion, so as to obtain a legitimate verdict one way or another. I have scrupulously avoided any under-hand tactics and have tried to be fair and straightforward with all.

If the verdict of the A.I.C.C. fairly and freely obtained goes against us, then I think it will not be proper for me to continue in the

executive, and if I desire to continue the agitation, it can only be from a party group, within the Congress, of opposition. I have not yet been able to unburden my mind fully but that is not possible in a letter. I hope the pleas and arguments advanced above will satisfy you that there is nothing improper or unbecoming in my present attitude and activities. The task has been most painful and odious. I should have felt much more happy, and secured a better peace of mind if I had also remained silent like the rest and suppressed this inner feeling of revolt. I considered the position for a long time and only after mature consideration decided the present course of action, as the only consistent and honest course for a Satyagrahi, *i.e.*, devotee of truth, regardless of the consequences to self and others. My only hope and desire is that in spite of these honest differences, personal relations with colleagues and friends will remain as pleasant as ever; I for myself will certainly try to avoid all unpleasantness and personal recriminations, though at times it hurts me to hear colleagues attributing sinister motives to me.

Yours sincerely,
K.F. Nariman

P.S. Immediately on my return from Jubbulpore, I have addressed urgent reminders to several members of different provinces inviting their provincial views. I expect a reply in a week or ten days, on receipt of which I shall immediately communicate to the General Secretary. The newspaper report of alleged ban, which is neither contradicted nor confirmed, has caused further difficulties and delay. I shall thank you to let me know, if possible by wire, as soon as you get any definite news on that point. A message to the effect "Report false or true" will be enough.

I shall also thank you to let me know the result of your further deliberations at Delhi. I hope the view that prevailed at Jubbulpore that in case of ban, matters should not be precipitated, will be maintained. I will anxiously await your reply. I am submitting a separate statement for consideration of colleagues.

Hoping to be excused for the length of the letter and with *Pranams* to all, including Gandhiji and all colleagues.

K.F. Nariman

111. From K.F. Nariman

Bombay
13.12.1933

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am sending this urgent message with a messenger and shall thank you to send me a detailed reply through the same messenger, who will wait till your deliberations are over. Please request Pandit Jawaharlal to send detailed reply including full instructions as regards the future course. What was the general view of leaders after considering the new position and whether they were inclined to consider the suggestion made in the statement and all other matters relevant to the issue? I have sent a copy of the statement to Pandit Jawaharlal.

Thanking you,

Yours sincerely,
K.F. Nariman

112. From M.K. Gandhi*

Patna
18.3.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Mathurdas tells me that you have a lurking fear that I am not doing anything or as much as I should with regard to the communal unity. If you entertain this fear I would like to disabuse you of the fear. My views are just as strong as they were on the necessity of this unity. But I have come to the conclusion that this is the time for real lovers of unity to sit still and simply pray showing in their individual action what a living unity of hearts can mean. Do you not meet in your practice with boils which grow worse with teasing? I find communal discord such a boil. The more you tease it the worse it becomes. It needs a rest cure. But if you differ from the view I have expressed you have only to give me your prescription and you know that I shall do my best to follow it.

*Home Political. F. No. 3/6, 1934, National Archives of India.

Please, therefore, tell me frankly what you think I should do to reach the goal which you and I cherish in common.

I met Sarojini devi in Hyderabad and had a fairly long chat with her on the proposals discussed in Bombay. My emphatic opinion is that this paralysis of the intelligentsia must be removed. However, much therefore I may differ as to the Council-Entry programme, I would welcome a party of Congressmen prosecuting the programme rather than they should be made sullen, discontented and yet utterly inactive. I still retain the view that the Congress cannot without committing suicide give up the Poona resolution authorising restricted individual civil disobedience. But there too if the majority of Congressmen do not feel like it, I would warmly welcome a meeting of the AICC at which it should express its opinion and withdraw the Poona resolution and suspend or discontinue civil resistance. I am sure that the country will gain by their courageous behaviour.

Malaviyaji is here and will be for some time. How I wish you were also here. Dr. Bidhan too has come. I am likely to be in and about Patna during the whole of this month and even after.

I hope you are keeping well. Zohra must write to me and not dismiss her humble pupil out of her mind.

Maulana Sahib too has come.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi

113. From M.K. Gandhi*

Patna
5.4.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

It was good of you, Bhulabhai and Dr. Bidhan Roy to come all the way to Patna to discuss the resolutions arrived at recently at an informal meeting¹ of some Congressmen and ascertain my opinion on

* Home Political. F. No. 3/6, 1934, National Archives of India.

¹The meeting commenced on 31 March at Dr. Ansari's residence in Daryaganj, Delhi, and was attended by over forty delegates. On 1st April, it was decided to revive the All-India Swarajya Party 'in order to enable Congressmen who are not offering civil resistance to undertake through an organisation constructive programme as contemplated in the Poona settlement'.

them. I have no hesitation in welcoming the revival of the Swarajya Party and the decision of the meeting to take part in the forthcoming elections to the Assembly, which you tell me is about to be dissolved. My views on the utility of legislatures in the present state are well known. They remain on the whole what they were in 1920, but I feel that it is not only right, but it is the duty of every Congressman, who for some reason or other does not want to or cannot take part in the Poona programme and who has faith in entry into the legislatures to seek entry and form combinations in order to prosecute the programme which he or they believe to be in the interest of the country. Consistently with my view above mentioned, I shall be at the disposal of the Party at all times and render such assistance as it is in my power to give.

Yours sincerely,
M.K. Gandhi

114. From T.B. Sapro

23.4.1934

My dear Doctor Saheb,

Since my return from England in August last I have been scrupulously keeping aloof from public affairs and have not ventured to express any opinion on any public matter. Nevertheless, I have been closely following the course of events, here and in England, and trying to form as detached an opinion as it is possible for me to do. During the last one month events have moved very quickly in our country and I need scarcely tell you with what satisfaction I have followed the part which you have played in bringing about results which, even though belated, must be welcomed by every one who is anxious about the future of India. I have never concealed from any one my differences with Congressmen on the question of civil disobedience or direct action, or in respect of some other political phrases which have seemed to me to be too vague and indefinite. At times I have exposed myself to serious misgivings and misunderstandings, but my convictions have been deep in this matter and are still very deep and yet in spite of these differences I have always maintained that there is plenty of ability, talent, patriotism and spirit of self-sacrifice among Congress-

men which should enable them to fill a place in our legislatures which no other party in my opinion can so adequately fill. It has, therefore, always seemed to me to be a matter of deep regret that they should have arrived at a decision a few years ago which has prevented them from making their contribution to the building up of our national strength in the legislature. If you will allow me to quote from the speech which I delivered on the 23rd of December, 1932, at the concluding session of the third Round Table Conference : "I am not one of those men", I said so then, "who would like to keep the Congressmen out of the Constitution, and I make a confession to you that I should consider it my duty to persuade every single Congressmen whom I could influence to come inside the Constitution and to work it. I do not wish them to be treated as outlaws." These are the views that I expressed in 1932. These are precisely the views which I hold today. It is mainly because of my great personal regard for you and for the genuine type of nationalism which you represent that I am venturing to write to say how pleased I am that you have the part which you have in reviving the Swarajya Party. I sincerely hope and trust that your efforts may be endorsed at the meeting of the Congress which I understand, is about to be held.

I should not, however, in the slightest degree be surprised if you did meet with opposition on the part of one section of Congressmen. It is perfectly natural that on a big question like this there should be differences of opinion even among men belonging to the same party; nevertheless I hope you may succeed. In any case, I wish you success.

I am most reluctant to express any opinion on current politics and yet my regard for you personally compels me to tell you what I feel.

I need scarcely add that I was immensely pleased also with the decision of the Mahatma. A less big person might have put his personal prestige above the interest of the country. It does require courage to revise your decisions.

I have been reading all that has been appearing in the newspapers about the White Paper. My views on the White Paper are contained in the Memorandum, which I submitted. I have never concealed from any one the fact that White Paper is not a document over which we can enthuse, and yet I have never subscribed to the view that it is as black as it is represented to be by some people, nor have I have been able to understand what exactly is meant by 'rejecting' it any more than what is meant by accepting it. Perhaps I am taking a too realistic view of the situation. This, however, does not mean that we should not work for its alteration in a material degree. It is, however,

in my opinion a little premature to talk about it until we know what the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee is going to be and also what sort of bill Government is to introduce in Parliament. My conviction, however, is that notwithstanding the fact that we have allowed too much time to elapse before waking up to the gravity of the situation, we may yet be able to produce some result if we can, with a fair degree of unanimity, say what exactly we want. In my humble opinion ambiguous or negative attitude will never do. There are, however, lions in the path, the most ferocious of them being the Communal Award. I should not like to speak about it if I could avoid doing it as I know a certain section of opinion is very sensitive on the question of the Communal Award. We have come within an inch of settlement and yet in the end we have failed. That has been our experience during the last four or five years, if not more. I fear that each attempt that has failed has made our position worse and has made our critics say in England that we cannot compose our differences. From their point of view—and indeed from our point of view also—it is of no consequence whether the Hindus are to blame for it or the Muslims are to blame for it, or both of them. The bare fact of the situation is that we have not been able to settle our differences and we cannot today replace the Communal Award by an agreed settlement. I have never been in love with the Communal Award. I do not look upon it as absolutely perfect—and yet it seems to me that either we must compose our differences or somebody else must play the part of the arbitrator. My attitude, therefore, is this. Let us by all means replace the Communal Award by an agreed settlement, but if we are satisfied that it is impossible to do so, let us not waste any more time in vain but reconcile ourselves to it, not because it is good or perfect but because there is nothing else to take its place and let us work together in the hope that when better spirit prevails and better time comes, we may use the opportunities that may come our way for achieving that unity which we have hitherto not been able to achieve. Any other course, to my mind, can only tend to paralyse our activity and strengthen the hands of our opponents in England. There is nothing that will please them more than our repeated failures to compose our differences and our incapacity to trust each other. It is obvious that some of the safeguards in the White Paper, to which we take such serious exception, are directly traceable to the communal issue. Our attack on these safeguards cannot have the desired effect so long as we are unable to replace the Communal Award by some mutual agreement. Throughout my work

in London I have been conscious of this weakness and I must say that I do feel conscious of that weakness even today.

I have no desire to interfere with your decisions but I have thought it only fair that I should let you know personally what I feel about the whole matter. There are some other aspects of the constitutional issue which I should have liked to place before you but I refrain. Perhaps we may meet and talk.

Wishing you every good luck and success in your constructive efforts and with a humble but sincere expression of my admiration for the spirit which you have displayed.

I remain,
Yours very sincerely,
T.B. Sapro

P.S. I do hope that Government will be wise enough to dissolve the Assembly and to give you people a fair chance.

115. Statement to the Press* :

Delhi
27.4.1934

“Since the day it was decided at Delhi that the Swarajya party should be revived and more particularly from the moment Mr. Gandhi’s approval and support had been published much has been written and said about it both in India and England. Mr. Gandhi’s momentous decision relating to Satyagraha and Civil Resistance and his advice to the Congressmen met with a chorus of approval throughout the length and breadth of the country. All this was fully expected.

“In so far as the revival of the Swarajya Party is concerned, some issues have been raised which require to be clarified. The history of the origin and conduct of the Swarajya Party from 1922 to 1930 are too well known to require repetition. I am aware of no resolution of the Indian National Congress about dissolving the Swarajya Party at any time, though there are a series of them which recognise its

**Indian Annual Register*, January-June 1934, Vol. 1 (Calcutta, n.d.), pp. 269-70.

existence at first as a minority and then majority party of Congressmen which had its own constitution and its own individuality and am aware of no resolution of the Swarajya Party by which it, at any time, was dissolved. It, however, remained in abeyance from 1930 to 31st March 1934 when it was decided to revive it.

"By sheer force of logic those Congressmen who are for this revival must meet to appoint its office-bearers and revise its constitution to suit existing conditions and formulate its policy and programme of work. From the day of its inception it was a party of Congressmen and from the first day of its existence it sought recognition and approval of its policy and programme by the Congress. After the Belgaum session of the Congress it was actually authorised to represent the Indian National Congress in the legislatures.

"It is therefore futile to suggest that there is any new departure about its revival. It had existed all time and now the Ranchi Conference is convened primarily to take the necessary steps to make it a pulsating and living organisation.

"One of its essential aims has been to seek from the All-India Congress Committee the approval and support which had been vouchsafed to it by Mr. Gandhi and which it enjoyed in the past. I need say no more about the policy and programme of the party as they will eventually emerge from the Ranchi Conference. But I would request all my Congress colleagues not to prejudge any issue. Let me assure them that the ideals of the Congress are sacred to the Swarajya Party and Swarajists will leave nothing undone to vindicate them even as they have done in the past.

"I must say a word about our inability to change the date of the Ranchi Conference. All difficulties have already been pointed out in the Press statement issued yesterday from the Secretariat. It is left to me now to make a appeal. For reasons of health I am bound to go abroad on the 24th May. The meeting of the A.I.C.C. on the 18th and 19th May will hardly leave me any time to do if the Swarajist Conference does not meet in the first week of May at Ranchi. That is where we shall have the advantage of Mahatmaji's advice. I feel it is my duty to complete all spade work before leaving India which means that the Swarajya Party must be in full working trim. We have to be in complete readiness against any emergency. If the Government dissolve the Assembly we shall have only a few months before us and not a day can be lost and if they do not we shall have a year or more to work in constituencies. In either case our organisation must be in fighting trim.

"The re-assembled Congress organisation will have to distribute its constructive and instructive work to the different departments and I would suggest autonomy to all these departments within their spheres as Mr. Gandhi proposed at Lahore. I earnestly hope that this will set all controversies at rest and all Congressmen will unite in a spirit of helpful cooperation and do their duty by our Motherland according to our lights".

116. To T.B. Sapro

Delhi
28.4.1934

My dear Tej Bahadur Sapro,

I am delighted to receive your letter. Please accept my sincere thanks for the kind and complimentary language you have employed with reference to the humble efforts I have made in trying to resuscitate the political life of the country. I assure you but for the invaluable help of friends who are equally responsible together for the steps we have taken, I alone would not have been able to achieve any result.

We have always admired the consistency with which you have advocated your views and we all appreciate the firmness which has characterised your advocacy of India's constitutional rights. Although, it has not been possible for Congressmen during the last 14 or 15 years, in fact longer, to see eye to eye with you, there have been more occasions than one when your cooperation on critical junctures such as for instance, the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations, has proved of considerable value. In spite of differences of points of view, there arise occasions in the political life of the country when on specific issues many schools of thought find it necessary to coordinate their activities. We have now taken definite turn for a definite end and I quite agree with you that all does not promise to be smooth sailing and there are "lions in the path". I fully appreciate your point of view in relation to the Communal Award as also the objectionable features of the White Paper and in the main, I am in substantial agreement with you. There is no gainsaying the fact that the weakness you have pointed out cannot easily be overlooked. Had it been possible for those who hold extreme stand-points with reference to this weakness

to come closer to one another for the larger purpose and the ultimate goal of India, most of our troubles would have been over long ago. And yet, I cannot help feeling that if we have to find a way out, we must not close our eyes to the realities of the situation.

Apparently the Government is not quite decided in its mind about extending the life of the Assembly or dissolving it. But, it appears to me that if they extend the life of the Assembly, it will greatly add to the prestige of the Congress and the revived Swarajya Party, for, there can be only one interpretation in such a step namely, that the Government is not prepared to run the risk of facing an adverse verdict of the country. If they do not dissolve the Assembly, we shall have an ampler opportunity of nursing the constituencies.

I am leaving for Ranchi tomorrow for the Conference. I hope I shall have the pleasure of meeting you some time in the near future before I go abroad and have a fuller opportunity of an interchange of views,

With kindest regards,

Yours very sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

117. To Shaukatullah Ansari

Delhi
21.5.1934

My dear Shaukoo,

I do not know whether you are still getting your weekly packages of *Bombay Chronicle* and whether you have been following the trend of political events in India since the end of March last. It will be much too long to tell you everything from the beginning about the revival of the Swarajya Party if you have not already followed the trend of events. Briefly, those Congressmen who were desirous of seeing the deadlock, inactivity and paralysis changed into life and activity met together in my house at Delhi and decided to revive the Swarajya Party which later, as previously arranged with Mahatma Gandhi, was blessed and supported by him. In the first week of May we took steps at Ranchi to consolidate the Swarajya Party and

formulate its policy, constitution and programme. We desired to have it recognised by the Congress and thus to get the desired moral support in our electioneering campaign for the Assembly, which is to take place next autumn. The All-India Congress Committee meeting just held at Patna has more than fulfilled our hopes and desires and has given its sanction and entire support by appointing a permanent Congress Parliamentary Board to function as a permanent wing of the Congress to control and manage elections to the various legislatures and to formulate the broad policies, on which our representatives will act as and when the various important questions affecting the economic and political situation in the country arise. This is, you see, far beyond all our expectations. I have been elected as the president of the Board.¹ In my absence Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya will be acting as President.² It is hoped that the Congress candidates will have an easy walk-over in the coming elections. Our only trouble are the Muslims and the Sikhs. I am afraid we shall not be able to get a single Sikh returned and very few Muslims. We hope, out of the 30 seats in the Assembly to capture at least 15, but this 15 would not be all pure Swarajists. We cannot hope to have pure Swarajists in larger number than seven to eight. The others will be returned by the Muslim Unity Board³ pledged to Swarajist policy and programme. Since the beginning of April, I have had to carry on the work of the Swarajya Party, besides my professional work and the culminating effort during the last days at Patna, has taken away a great deal out of me. I feel quite a physical wreck and would be very glad to get away for three or four months' change, rest and cure.

In my absence Begum Ansari, Zohra, and Qudsia would remain mostly in Delhi, although I had wanted them to go away to a hill station or at least to Hyderabad (Deccan) for the month of August

¹About a hundred Congressmen representing all the provinces met at Ranchi on 2nd and 3rd May in order to implement the decision of the Delhi Conference. Dr. Ansari presided.

²The All-India Congress Committee met at Patna on May 18 and 19, under the presidentship of Madan Mohan Malaviya. Gandhi moved the resolution regarding Council entry. The resolution stated that, as there was a vast body of members in the Congress who believed in the necessity of entry into the legislatures as a step in the country's progress towards its goal, a Parliamentary Board was to conduct the elections to the legislatures on behalf of the Congress.

³The Muslim Unity Board which met at Lucknow on 16 May approved the revival of the Swarajya Party with its programme as outlined at the Ranchi meeting. Among those who attended the meeting of the Board were Khaliquz-zaman, Mohammad Ismail Khan, Shaukat Ali and the Raja of Salempur.

when their school, will be closed. But Zohra's teachers would not advise her to take such a long holiday. Her teacher in Chemistry and English specially wants her to keep up her studies during the vacation. Zohra herself is extremely keen about it although, I am afraid, her health is not of the best and she would be very much better able to continue her studies if she took at least two month's holiday. But, as you know, Zohra is my weakness. I do not like to do anything to upset her. I have, therefore, told her to go with her *Ammajan* and Qudsia for a holiday for as long as she could, consistent with her studies.

In my absence, I have also arranged with Mr. Sulemen, the Engineer, to have the outside terrace re-roofed in order that the rooms underneath may become habitable. You know, they have been leaking frightfully and have become damp and unsanitary. Along with new roofing, there will also be arrangements for ventilation and air-conditioning. The two staircases on either side would be removed and two extra rooms would be added underneath, one as sterilising room for the operating theatre and the other as bath room and lavatory for the rooms. There will be two additional lavatories added to the rooms. All would be of the latest flush type. I have also arranged to have four fresh rooms built for patients, two below and two above with bath room and lavatories at the site where the old water closets are situated. Behind that part where the wine trees are planted, I am going to have a suit of rooms built for the nursing staff. I will thus have a very small unit consisting of eight rooms in the operating theatre, sterilising rooms and rooms for nursing staff and thus be able to take eight patients. I hope to have all these in perfect working order by next October or November.

Now, as regards my programme in Europe. Nawab Saheb and myself with a few of his staff are sailing from Bombay on the 24th May reaching Venice on 4th June and Vienna on 5th June. We will stay in Vienna for three weeks *i.e.*, up to 26th June, in order to have His Highness thoroughly examined by Professor Luger, the great Gastrointestinal Internist. Our address would be Hotel Bristol, Vienna. From 27th June to 17th July, we would be at Pistany (Czechoslovakia), taking mud-bath and cure there. If His Highness would permit, I would like after a week's stay there to go either to Munchen or Frieburgh-in-Britesgau for a fortnight's deep-ray treatment, as I find still some osteo-arthristic pains in my cervical joints. If not, after three weeks stay there I would go with him to London for four weeks. Here again, I would like him to release me after a week to go to Baud Nauheim for three weeks' cure for my heart condition. If he

does not permit me to take these cures during his stay in Europe, I shall have to remain behind for five weeks and not accompany him to India, where he intends to sail on the 23rd of August reaching Bombay on 3rd September. It would then mean my leaving Europe five weeks later. If, on the other hand, he permits me to take my cures, then I shall accompany him to India. I would like you to spend a little time with me in any of these places, namely, Vienna, Pistany or London. I think the first two places would be better for you, unless, you are very much enamoured of London. The reason for my suggesting Vienna or Pistany is that in London, Mrs. Ansari and Harold would appropriate all my time and attention and would be jealous of every minute I give you or everything I do for you. I think it best in the interest of peace all around us both to avoid such a situation. At any rate, I must have you with me even though only for a few days to a week.

It is indeed very strange that my letter to you in which I gave everything about Mrs. Ansari and your letter to me and Begum Ansari have not reached our hands. In Delhi, I have made *puc̣ca* arrangements for my post. It is carefully preserved and handed to me without any loss of time. I have not had any complaints during these two years since I have taken the arrangement of the *dak* from Khalif's hands and am myself dealing it. However, I am absolutely certain of writing to you all about things in full detail. Now, however, you are in full possession of all the facts and I hope you would act wisely and with circumspection. Please write to me to Vienna to Hotel Bristol from 5th to 26th June and to Thermia Palace Hotel, Pistany, (Czechoslovakia) from 27th June to 17th July, unless you hear from me to the contrary. I am dictating this letter in the train on my return home from Patna. I shall have only four hours and a half in Delhi before starting for Bhopal *en route* Bombay.

With all my love and best wishes for the success in your examination about which I hope you would let me know at once.

Yours affectionately devoted Uncle,
M.A. Ansari.

118. From Mohanlal Saxena

Lucknow
8.10.1934

My dear Doctor Saheb,

Perhaps you are aware that notwithstanding Pt. Malaviya's repeated assurances and declarations that Dr. Bhagwan Das will not be opposed, Mr. Chintamani's candidature has been announced at the eleventh hour. He will have the support of the so-called Nationalist Congress Party.¹ We have no doubt as to the result of the contest. But we want Bhagwan Das should be returned with a thumping majority. Therefore, it is necessary that leaders of all India reputation should visit this constituency without any delay to counteract the propaganda of Pt. Malaviya. I hope you will appreciate the urgency of the situation and will come here at least for a week.

Please wire your date of arrival so that we may fix up your programme.

With sincerest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Mohanlal Saxena

¹M.S. Aney and M.M. Malaviya resigned from the Congress Parliamentary Board on 28 July 1934 and formed the Nationalist Party. Their aim was to campaign against the Communal Award as well as the White Paper and to set up such candidates for election to the Assembly who would work for the rejection of both.

119. From Iswar Saran

Benares
9.10.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I have just heard that you are back. Hearty welcome home. I hope you are well and fit.

I am standing as a Congress candidate for the Benares and Gorakhpur Divisions. Krishna Kant Malaviya,¹ a nephew of Pandit Malaviya, has been put forward to oppose me.

In elections exaggerations and false hopes are so common. I deliberately use the language of caution and extreme moderation. So far, my chances are excellent and if nothing unexpected happens, I hope to win this seat for the Board. I shall put it higher than that.

I have numerous friends and relations in these two Divisions. Gorakhpur and Basti—the deciding factors—owing to family influence and association will be solid in my favour. But in elections you never know. Malaviyaji's great name and influence are against me. As matters stand, the situation is most hopeful. I shan't put it higher than that.

Best luck, Best wishes.

Yours,
Iswar Saran

¹1881-1941; editor of Hindi Weekly, *Abhyudaya*, and monthly, *Maryada*.

120. From K.F. Nariman

Bombay
10.10.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Immediately after you left Bombay, a fresh development has taken place with regard to the Parliamentary Board affairs which needs your immediate attention. As you are aware, under the election rules of the Government of India Act, a candidate is disqualified if he is convicted for more than twelve months. This makes no exception for political offences; hence, several of our candidates who suffered under the said disability on account of conviction for a year or more in the last civil disobedience movement had to apply to the local government for removal of the said disqualification. A section of the candidates, as well as members of the Parliamentary Board, including myself, strongly objected to this humiliating course and suggested that government should have removed the said disqualification so far as Congress candidates were concerned by a general circular so as to avoid the necessity of individual applications. So far as I understand, that was also the view of Mahatma Gandhi. However, the General Secretaries

and others were of the opinion that under the law a personal application was necessary which would only be a formal one and an assurance was given that there would not be a single rejection on account of conviction in the last civil disobedience movement and in the event of any such single rejection, it should be made a point of honour and all Congress candidates would be asked to withdraw as a protest. It was on that understanding that the objection was waived and candidates suffering under that disability agreed to submit individual and personal applications to the government. Shortly after that it was reported in the Press that one Mr. Abdullah Khan, a nominee of the Frontier Congress Committee, probably for the local by-election, applied for the removal of the disqualification but the local government rejected his application because of his conviction in the civil disobedience movement and his nomination was not accepted. Thereupon, I drew the attention of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and also of Mahatma Gandhi on the subject; but it was then stated that the said gentleman was not nominated by the Board and therefore, the occasion for such a protest did not arise. But it was understood, as stated in my previous letter, that in the event of such a rejection of the Board nominee, the contemplated action should be taken.

Thereafter, comes the news of the rejection of another nominee of the Parliamentary Board namely Dwarkaprasad Mishra from Jubbulpore, a well-known Congress leader of that Province. That case becomes more glaring because the application of his colleague, Seth Govind Das of the same Province, is granted though both were practically under the same disabilities and for the same causes. This outrage has naturally caused great resentment in C.P. and Seth Govind Das has phoned to me as well as wired that this should be made an all-India matter and some definite action must be taken on the lines proposed. He himself has tendered his withdrawal from the nomination and I also have sent a letter to the same effect to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Sardar Vallabhbhai and Bhulabhai Desai¹ are of the opinion that

¹1877-1946; educated in Elphinstone College, Bombay; passed Advocate's examination of the Bombay High Court in 1905, and was enrolled as an advocate in the same year; took an active part in the Home Rule League, from which he resigned in 1919; appeared on behalf of the Bardoli peasants before the Broomfield Committee, 1925; and again before the Bardoli Inquiry Committee, 1931; organised the Swadeshi Sabha during the civil disobedience movement and, served on the Public Debt Security Committee appointed by the Congress in 1932; represented the Congress at the International Conference on India held at Geneva in 1933. On his return to India, he took an active interest in the formation of the Congress Parliamentary Board, 1934, and later became its General Secretary and President.

such individual action should not be taken but we must await definite final decision from the Parliamentary Board as well as the Working Committee and pending such decision our nominations should continue, as individual action in such a matter would cause disruption and demoralisation. So, under his instruction, I have allowed my nomination to remain and I understand Seth Govind Das too has consented to do the same. However, under these circumstances, it is essential to call an urgent special meet of Parliamentary Board to consider the whole situation in view of this recent development and to give effect to the contemplated proposal as suggested in the previous meeting.

I, therefore, request you to arrange to call such an urgent special meeting as early as possible; if you so desire, we can make the necessary arrangements for the same in Bombay at a short notice. I am sure you will agree with me that the subject is important enough for such a special meeting. I hope, therefore, as President of the Board, you will kindly make the necessary arrangements to summon an urgent special meeting of the Board as early as possible, and I presume, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, as President of the A.I.C.C., will make similar arrangements to call a meeting of the Working Committee.

Yours sincerely,
K.F. Nariman

121. From Iswar Saran

Benares
11.10.1934

Congratulation on the success of the Congress Parliamentary Board in the Benaras and Gorakhpur Divisions.

My services are at the disposal of Board.

Best luck.

Iswar Saran

122. From Krishna Chandra¹

Brindaban
13.10.1934

Dear Doctor Sahib,

The election contest in the Agra Division, I hope, you know well, is keen enough between Hirday Nath Kunzru and Shri Krishna Dutt Paliwal. Hirday Nath Kunzru commands the active support of many of his most sincere and well-stationed personages, who are trying their utmost to get him up. In U.P. four out of eight candidates have already been elected unopposed. It is, therefore, necessary that we should try hard for the remaining four seats.

I may also say that the greatest contest in U.P. now will be in the Agra Division. Pandit Hirday Nath Kunzru's personality has to be taken into account.

We feel it necessary that you may come over here at least for one evening to explain the point at a public meeting in Muttra. Your presence and your public speech will help us a great deal.

And it will not be much inconvenient to you. At the same time we will not take much of your time. While proceeding to Bombay for the Congress you may give us simply four hours at Muttra. You may come by the evening Madras Express which reaches Muttra at 7.20 or so. Straightaway you will proceed to the place of the meeting and deliver your speech. Thereafter you may meet one or two important personages. And then you may leave Muttra for Bombay by the B.B. & C.I. or G.I.P. Express which start from the Muttra junction at 11 or 11.30 p.m.

I hope you will kindly condescend to accept the invitation and let me have your acceptance and the time of your arrival by telegram at the following address :

Dr. Shrinath Bhargava,
Chhatta Bazar, Muttra

Yours sincerely,
Krishna Chandra

¹Professor Krishna Chandra was Chairman of the Brindaban Municipal Board, and Convenor of the District Congress Parliamentary Board,

123. From B.C. Roy¹

Calcutta
14.10.1934

My dear Ansari,

I am enclosing copy of a letter which I have addressed to Mohanlal Saxena. I wish you were at Wardha when we were cornered with the threat either to drop all the candidates for Bihar and U.P. or we had to find sixty thousand rupees for them, that is five thousand for each of the ten candidates. I wish you would now help us with collection of some money. The situation is becoming impossible unless you come to the rescue.

I am trying to get you on the phone today and I shall explain matters to you if I can get you.

Yours sincerely,
- B.C. Roy

¹Bidhan Chandra Roy (1882-1961); vice-chancellor, Calcutta University, 1942-44; president, All-India Medical Council, 1933-45; chief minister, West Bengal, 1948-61.

124. Encl: B.C. Roy to Mohanlal Saxena

Calcutta
14.10.1934

My dear Mohanlal,

I have received your telegram of the 13th instant.

I find that in U.P. there are eight seats of which three have gone uncontested. When we were discussing the financing of the seats in U.P. we calculated that of these eight seats Pandit Malaviyaji's seat would not be contested; Dr. Bhagwan Das would go uncontested; Sardar Jogendra Singh would find his own money and for the rest, five Hindu seats and one Muslim seat, that is to say, six seats we have to find thirty thousand rupees. I find now that two of those six seats have gone uncontested, namely, those of Pandit Govind Ballabh and Munshi Iswar Saran. Therefore, the total requirement of U.P. should

be only four seats amounting to twenty thousand rupees. I do not know if you have paid anything to Sherwani. He had written to me that he had not been paid anything.

I know that Sri Prakasa has stood as a candidate in Pandit Malaviya's constituency but I do not think you can ask the Parliamentary Board to pay for his candidature. The fact is that we have to find twenty thousand rupees for the seats in Bengal because the original contestants have either disappeared or have been replaced by those who like the U.P. and Bihar candidates are good Congressmen without money. For this reason you should not look to the Board for more than twenty thousand rupees for U.P. Candidly speaking, it is surprising to find that the whole of India should depend entirely upon two persons for financing large sums of money. As luck would have it, most of the seats, having gone uncontested, you must do with twenty thousand rupees.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mr. Bhulabhai Desai.

Yours sincerely,
B.C. Roy

125. From Vallabhbhai Patel

Bombay
15.10.1934

My dear Ansari,

You must have reached home by this time and I am expecting to hear from you about our friend Asaf Ali who must be feeling great relief by your presence there. I have received a very urgent letter from Rajen Babu¹ saying that his election campaign is suffering heavily as

¹Rajendra Prasad (1884-1963); educated in Patna and in Calcutta; remained an 'outside sympathiser, not an active participant' during the Swadeshi movement in Bengal; served as an articled clerk with Shamsul Huda and started practice in August 1911; closely associated with Gandhi in the Champaran affair and became one of his 'ardent devotees and zealous advocates of his methods'; presided over the Bihar Provincial Political Conference at Bhagalpur where the principle of non-cooperation was adopted, August 1920; helped to set up national schools and colleges in Bihar; chairman of the Hindu Mahasabha Reception Committee, December 1923; elected chairman of the Patna Municipal Committee, 1927; president, Indian National Congress, 1934, 1939, 1947-8; president, Indian Constituent Assembly, 1946-50; president of India, 1950-62.

he is greatly handicapped on account of the expected assistance not having been received from Dr. Bidhan as arranged at Wardha about a month ago. Dr. Bidhan has undertaken the responsibility of financing that province to the extent of Rs. 20,000 but unfortunately he has only given them Rs. 3,000 up to now. It would be a misfortune if such sure seats were lost to the Congress for want of financial assistance, particularly when that province is suffering such terrible calamities. Bhulabhai has gone to Gujrat on tour but I expect he will return in a day or two. I am anxious to assist Bihar, but I can only do so after I hear from you as to what extent I can rely upon you for assistance in this matter. Please give me some definite idea so that on Bhulabhai's arrival I may be able to settle up the thing. The matter is so urgent that it cannot be postponed up to our meeting in Bombay. If you can give me a clear idea by wire immediately after the receipt of this letter, it would be much better as it would be advisable to send financial assistance also by wire, if possible. I expect you here latest on the 21st morning.

Hope you have all reached safely and are doing well.

Yours sincerely,
Vallabhbhai

126. From Bansi Dhar¹

Beawar
16.10.1934

Dear Sir,

Respectfully we beg to submit that we have launched the election campaign in our province, but we are having a tough fight here confronted as we are with the mighty force of capitalism and loyalty. However, we are not disheartened at all and are determined to fight to the finish.

As we are in need of cooperation from outside, we would like to request you to grace us by your visit and address the election meeting here for a day. If it is not possible at all under the present

¹Secretary, Congress Parliamentary Board, Ajmer-Merwara,

circumstances, kindly convey your message to the voters of Ajmer-Merwara with blessings for the success of the Congress candidate, Mr. Mukat Beharilal Bhargava, Advocate.

We are,
Yours etc..
Bansi Dhar Vakil,
Secretary

127. Statement to the Press :

16.10.1935

Indications are becoming increasingly plain that the Congress Party will be the largest and the most powerful in the Assembly. The country's response to the call of the Congress is splendid, and I congratulate both the Congress and the country on the achievements so far recorded. The day is not far when the country will have to register its verdict at the polls, and I have every reason to hope that by a straight vote the country will endorse the National Demand for Self-determination, notwithstanding the side issues raised by other parties. With constitutional precedents in the making, the impartiality of the electoral machinery, also is on trial.

Electors, however, must know that the ballot system insures absolute secrecy of voting, and notwithstanding adverse influences which may be brought to bear on the independent exercise of their electoral right, they are free to vote as they like. Any one who has had experience of electioneering knows how many misleading issues are raised by interested parties to divert the otherwise straight vote of the electorate. Considerations of race, caste, religion, and personal aversions or friendships no less than corrupt practices are often pressed into service, and the real issues are thus deliberately befogged. But the one vital issue before the country is Self-determination as claimed by the Congress, and we want a clear verdict on this issue. Further the electors should not forget that work in the Assembly involves questions which are calculated to affect colossal economic interests of the country including vital matters relating to hundreds of crores worth of

trade. In regard to the day to day work in the legislature much will depend on the largest party and the vote of electors for one or another person may mean three years of gain or regrets. Individuals outside a powerful party may be worse than useless. Electors should not judge the capacity of candidates by their caste or creeds, but by their political experience, intrinsic merit, and capability for legislative work no less than by the strength of their party. One may be an eminently reasonable man in private life but utterly inept in dealing with highly experienced debaters of the official benches, or one may debate well without having the courage of his convictions to be ready to suffer for the public cause, or resist temptations. The electors should weigh all these considerations, and examine the credentials of candidates before making a decision, and returning their verdict in favour of the Congress in accordance with their independent judgment. Our country can advance towards the goal of Purna Swaraj only if the electors show a sense of responsibility at every stage, and courageously rise above personal, or passing considerations. The electors by disregarding the dictates of the higher interests of the country, would imperil their personal interests also. Enlightened self-interest also demands supporting the larger interests of the country.

The Congress with the National Demand as its chief objective holds the centre today, and is experiencing a strong pull from the Left. The Left is definitely in the grip of an intense sense of disappointment, born of repeated discouragement of constitutional methods. But the popular imagination clings to the Congress, and the Congress is still in a position to sign a treaty on behalf of the people. While all attempts to defeat the parliamentary activity of the Congress today may mean the unlocking of the flood-gates of chaos, dislocation of business and worse consequences, the success of the Congress at the polls is definitely calculated to usher in a new era of new hopes. The general trend of the country's opinion is amply clear, and the loss of a seat or two will make no difference. It is a thousand pities that in some places the plain and straight issue between the Congress and the Government of the day is being confused by emphasising a subsidiary issue which is the subject of a domestic controversy. Wherever such a triangle arises the main issue between the Government and the Congress should be allowed to be settled by a straight vote, and the domestic controversy should be definitely abandoned. After all, with a clear mandate from the country, the Congress as the strongest party in the legislature will not merely press for Self-determination with all its implications in the matter of the future constitution; but will leave nothing undone during the life-time of the Assembly to translate into law

its programme of National Reconstruction based on the most urgent economic requirements of the country.

Every voter must look upon himself as the custodian of the country's honour, and of both collective and personal interests, and therefore, he should not waste his vote on small or subsidiary issues or allow it to be exploited by candidates who are not supported by the most powerful party of the country.

M.A. Ansari

128. To Bhulabhai Desai

Wien,
7.10.1934

TELEGRAM

RECENT NEWSPAPER CONTROVERSY OVER MY CAREFULLY
WORDED STATEMENT HAS CONSIDERABLY SURPRISED ME
STOP STATEMENT WAS MADE AS PRESIDENT CONGRESS
PARLIAMENTARY BOARD AND NOT IN MY INDIVIDUAL
PRIVATE CAPACITY STOP IT EMBODIED FAITHFULLY RE-
SOLUTION PASSED RANCHI AFTER DUE DISCUSSION CON-
GRESSMEN PRESENT THERE AND FULL CONSULTATION
MAHATMAJI STOP IT DOES NOT CONTRAVENE PREVIOUS
CONGRESS DECISIONS BUT WHILST AVOIDING UNSEEMLY
CONTROVERSY REGARDING ACCEPTANCE OR REJECTION
COMMUNAL AWARD PLACES HIGHLY CONSTITUTIONAL
PRACTICAL METHOD ARRIVING NATIONAL SOLUTION OF
BOTH CONSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNAL PROBLEMS
STOP CONVENING CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY IS TO ME
LIVE AND IMMEDIATE ISSUE NOT CALCULATED SHELV-
ING THESE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS STOP THOSE WHO
CONSIDER IT DISTANT GOAL HAVE MISSED VERY PITH
OF PROBLEM FOR WITHOUT IT AS IMMEDIATE OBJECT-
IVE OUR POLICY BECOMES DEVOID ANY CONSTRUCTIVE
CONTRIBUTION AND OUR PROGRAMME LIFELESS UNPRA-
CTICAL STOP IF POLICY ARRIVED RANCHI MATERIALLY
CHANGED I FOR ONE WILL HAVE TO CONSIDER WHE-
THER I CAN USEFULLY REMAIN ON BOARD PLEASE WIRE
COPIES MAHATMAJI MEMBERS BOARD.

ANSARI

129. From Bhagwan Das

Chunar
16.10.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I enclose a copy of the letter I have addressed to Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. It explains itself. If, as I have written therein, I had been my own master in the matter, I should have had no hesitation at all in taking the necessary steps to resign my seat and offer it to Panditji direct. But as I have to go by the wishes of the Parliamentary Board which set me up and in whose hands I am completely, I should like you to get the Board's sanction to my proposal and inform me of its decision to enable me to do the right thing as early as may be legally possible.

Yours sincerely,
Bhagwan Das

130. Encl: Bhagwan Das to M.M. Malaviya

16.10.1934

My dear Malaviyaji,

Sri Prakasa has come to me here from Allahabad today. I have heard from him all that happened there. I am deeply distressed that a most unfortunate error in the preparation of the electoral rolls should deprive the Assembly of the presence and help of your unique personality. You know, I believe, the circumstances in which I had to give my consent to be nominated. Much against my inclinations, I had to yield to the pressure of friends. Now I find that I have been not only nominated but already actually elected owing to the generous withdrawal of other friends who were also nominated.

But the satisfaction of this uncontested and harmonious election has been wholly marred by the fact that you could not be similarly elected from the Allahabad-Jhansi constituency. Prakasa was flung into the breach at the last moment, by the joint secretary of the U.P. Congress Parliamentary Committee and other friends, when it was

seen that the seat was likely to go out of the hands of not only yourself but of the Congress also altogether. I understand from him that he offered to place his withdrawal in your hands saying that the seat was yours and that you had the right to make a gift of it to anyone you pleased; and that you agreed to accept his offer if Mr. Chintamani could be elected unopposed; but that you were yourself not willing that the seat should go to anyone else without a struggle. I am deeply sorry to learn that this could not be arranged, as there was another candidate in the field who could not be induced to withdraw. Prakasa is now in the exceedingly awkward position of finding himself a candidate when he had not the most distant intention of becoming one. I am further informed that Congressmen in all the districts of the constituency are already bestirring themselves and that a keen contest is impending.

As old men and sincere well-wishers of our people, you and I cannot but desire anxiously that the tension and the misunderstandings which have arisen or may arise, out of personal and partisan feelings, with regard to the nominations and withdrawals at Allahabad, may be avoided, both in the public interest and for private good-will; and in order that the greatest public service possible in the circumstances may be rendered with the least amount of unhealthy excitement, I therefore suggest a solution.

Personally, as you probably know, I am very loth to exchange my present retired life, quiet surroundings and literary pursuits, for the very restless and unwholesome atmosphere of modern high politics, into which I could only try—and all too vainly, in all probability—to introduce some disinfecting incense in the shape of indigenous traditional old-world ideas wrapped in the new words now in fashion and better understood. My chief interest in life now is to carry on this work of reinterpretation of the old to the new, and to pray perpetually for the well-being of all, in this quiet retreat. Your presence, however, in the Assembly would be very much more effective, with your very long experience of such work; and it suits your temperament also. I understand from Prakasa that you can stand from the Seven Cities, from which I have been elected, as your name is on the rolls of that constituency. I want therefore to retire or resign or do what else the technicalities might require, so that you could stand thence and be elected.

This seems to be the simplest solution of the difficulties that have cropped up. If I had been my own master in the matter, I should have taken the necessary steps at once; but as I am entirely in the hands of the Congress Parliamentary Board, to whom I gave my

consent for nomination, and by whom everything pertaining thereto has been done, I must obviously get their sanction before doing anything in this connection. I am, therefore, immediately communicating with them and asking for their consent. I am told that under the law I cannot resign my seat till I have been 'sworn in' as a member. Perhaps that law could be got round, as so many laws are being, which are not based upon real public conscience and support but only upon legal phrases; if not, I could resign immediately afterwards, and that would not be too late.

With reference to the case of Prakasa, I may mention here that, holding as a principle that not more than one man in a family, ordinarily, should devote himself to public work, while the others should attend to the needs of the dependent members, I have not been at all happy over Prakasa giving almost all his time to public work when no one else was available to look after his home. I had again and again to go back to Benares from Chunar, to look after his children (who, as you know, lost their mother when they were very small) whenever he went into jail. When he would not listen to reason, he and I agreed that I should shoulder a part of his burden of public work, though nearly exhausted, so that he might be able to look after his broken home a little better. Thus, I confess candidly, besides the pressure of friends, an important factor that weighed with me in giving consent to my nomination was that he would be out of it, for he told me, weeks before, that he was being badly pressed by the U.P. Congress Parliamentary Committee to stand, and that they would release him only if he could induce me to agree to stand. He told me also that you yourself, as the then president of the Parliamentary Board, offered him a safe seat; but that he had declined.

Now it so happens, by a strange combination of circumstances, that not only have I been elected, but that he also is being made to contest a seat. He tells me that he dislikes the idea of his going into the Assembly. Besides, his belonging to the Congress Socialist group makes another difficulty for him, as the group has decided that none of its members is to seek election. Only his duty to the Congress, as greater than his duty to the group, prevented him from refusing nomination outright, in the special circumstances mentioned. He is a socialist by conviction, in the sense that he believes that some important changes are needed in the economic structure of Indian society if the Indian people are to become really less unhappy than they are now, and he wants to work with that group and help it to work out (as indeed many thoughtful persons today desire there may be worked out) a scheme of sound socialism of the right type and on right lines;

and he is therefore most anxious to get out of his present difficult position. His hands, I know, are over full with many other items of public work; and, much against my repeated advice and the warnings of the family doctors he is again and again over-working himself, getting little breakdowns, and worsening his health which seems to have been lastingly injured by the dangerous illness that nearly killed him in jail in 1932. I also find him deeply distressed because some friends who, he feels, ought to have known him better, are casting aspersions on him and raising suspicions as to his motives in respect of what happened at Allahabad, notwithstanding his final offers that all candidates should withdraw and new nominations be made by further agreement. He feels that, instead of thus aspersing him, they should cooperate with him in rectifying what has happened owing to the remissness of all concerned with the accuracy of the electoral rolls. He is unnecessarily over-sensitive about it, for he should know, and should be able to keep inwardly a detached attitude towards the torrents of wrong emotions that are invariably let loose in modern elections whenever there is an absence of unanimity.

I therefore, write for him (so that his motives may not be suspected again if he himself wrote) that even if he wins, his seat will be entirely and always at the disposal of the Congress Parliamentary Board and yourself, and arrangement could be made, by his resignation, to send in Mr. Chintamani. Perhaps if you would write to Mahatma Gandhi yourself on the subject, his intervention would induce the Congress Parliamentary Board to agree to the above. I shall, on personal as well as public grounds be very happy if Mr. Chintamani is sent to the Assembly, for I trust that the occasions would be very rare when he would find himself not in agreement with the Congress group, and, being our finest parliamentarian, his brilliant support would add substantially to the strength of the Congress group's proposals for the good of the Indian people. Prakasa himself has the greatest admiration for Mr. Chintamani, under whom he learnt journalism in the past, and has been greatly grieved that Congressmen and he should misunderstand instead of appreciating each other.

If circumstances enable the arrangement above proposed to be carried through, it may well be hoped that better mutual understanding would be promoted; that the Liberals would be brought nearer to the Congress; and the gulf now separating the two and created mostly by personal irritations, be bridged.

In conclusion, I request that you may kindly give this letter your

earnest consideration and let me have your views as early as may be conveniently possible.

Yours sincerely,
Bhagwan Das

131. To Bhagwan Das

20.10.1934

My dear Bhagwan Das,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 16th October. I would place the matter before the Congress Parliamentary Board, which would meet in Bombay some time during the Congress week. But, I would like you to inform me whether, in view of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya's rejection of your offer about which I read in today's papers, you are still desirous of your letter being placed before the Congress Parliamentary Board.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

132. To Iswar Saran

20.10.1934

My dear Munshi Iswar Saran,

Allow me to offer you my hearty congratulations on your well deserved success. A word of explanation and apology for the unavoidable delay in writing to you. I reached Delhi on the 16th and was busy with the work of the Congress Parliamentary Board in general and the local elections in particular. The local difficulties are quite serious and fighting against a Government candidate and the Nationalist Party candidate has complicated matters. I am, however, more hopeful after

four days of strenuous work and am hopeful of Mr. Asaf Ali's¹ return with a good majority. Owing to these pre-occupations, I have been unable to attend my *dak* which had accumulated in my absence. I am just able to deal with the arrears when I am entrained for Bombay. I, therefore, hope you will excuse the unavoidable delay in writing to you.

With best good wishes and kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

¹1888-1953; educated at St. Stephen's College, Delhi; called to the Bar in London 1912; returned to India at the outbreak of War and joined the Home Rule League; participated in the Khilafat movement and gave up his practice during the non-cooperation movement; general secretary, Indian National Congress, 1927; member, Congress Working Committee, 1930; member, legislative assembly, 1934-46; arrested in August 1942, and released in May 1945; minister of Transport and Railways in the interim government formed in August 1945; governor of Orissa from June 1948 to May 1952,

133. To Mohanlal Saxena

20.10.1934

My dear Mohanlal,

You must have read in the papers that I reached Delhi on the 16th and immediately on arrival plunged head-long in the election fight. I have not had time to attend to my accumulated correspondence and all I could do was to deal with the most urgent. Now that I am entrained for Bombay, I am dealing with the letters received in my absence.

I must congratulate you on your splendid success in U.P. so far. But, you must not rest on your oars and continue your efforts to capture all the seats. I do not know whether in view of your extreme occupation in the election fight, you would be able to come to Bombay or not. If you do not come, please convey my congratulations individually to all the successful candidates and let me know regarding the

situation from time to time and in what way I can be of service to you.

With best wishes and most sincere regards,

Yours ever sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

134. From B.S. Pathik

Ajmer
22.10.1934

Dear Sir,

It is no boasting but a statement of bare facts that though resourceless and weak in manpower and opposed by most powerful and wealthiest rivals—who spared no mean tactics for sabotaging the Congress and Congress Assembly campaign—we were well able to create an atmosphere in favour of the Congress nominee, which had successfully disheartened all the reactionary forces in this constituency.

But now a fresh and undesirable development is threatening our success at a very inopportune juncture. To give a clearer idea of the situation, I hope, you will not mind if I enumerate below the briefest possible summary of the events which are linked with and form the basis of the present development of the situation.

In fact the coincidence of the period of the Congress and Assembly elections has proved to be a mischievous thing. It naturally tempted the non-Congress candidates to make their Agents enter Congress Committees in sufficient number, in order to stifle the Congress Assembly election campaign and to sabotage the Congress nominee, by thwarting the progress of Parliamentary Boards and Committees.

In Ajmer, both the anti-Congress candidates, *i.e.*, D.B. Har Bilas Sarda and Bhagchand Soni—a millionaire, got hold of some of the members from the very beginning and through them put every possible obstacle even in the way of nominating a candidate on Congress ticket, in which they did not succeed.

But fortunately for them, the Congress elections followed and they seized the opportunity to create further troubles. One thousand *khadi* dresses were prepared by only one anti-Congress candidate's

men and as many members mostly out of the menial staff of the Railway Workshops enrolled, without charging any membership fee. Nay, even Dr. Syed Mahmud was hoodwinked and through him a Congress election board was brought into being in which majority of the members was of their own men. The remaining were either baited and placated or kept tactfully in the dark.

The party that held office in the old P.C.C. was, due to many reasons, inclined to favour the other candidate, *i.e.*, D.B. Har Bilas Sarda. This factor proved to be most helpful to the miscreants and consequently, when the plot was unearthed by this Board's authorities, they had gathered enough strength under the protecting wings of the old P.C.C. officials, to face any attack from the sincere Congressmen to frustrate their plans. The authorities of Congress too did everything to shield them by tactfully defeating the efforts of Board's authorities to combat this sabotaging. For instance, though everything was being done under their very nose, and all these malpractices of interested persons had become the everyday gossips of *bazaar* in Ajmer, still Congress office and the Congress Election Board took no steps to check or expose them, until, I sent them several written complaints from citizens and threatened to expose their tactics. Of course as the local Parliamentary Board was a creation of the local Congress and was entirely at their mercy, we could not dare to invite an open hostility with them.

At last, however, a committee was appointed by the Provincial Congress to enquire into the complaints and I undertook to help the Committee. But just when the Committee was busy in enquiring, Mr. Haribhau Upadhyaya—the President of the then Provincial Congress—on the one hand counselled us not to send any nominations to the Congress Election Board, and on the other hand stealthily made a compromise with the miscreants. Thus only the persons of both these parties, in which majority party was that of non-Congress candidates, got nominated and were declared elected unopposed—the whole list being proposed and seconded by two members only, against the letter and the spirit of the constitution.

Anyhow, when we came to know of all this, we again asserted and consequently the election was quashed. But this did not remove the threatening danger totally. The one thousand members, enrolled by interested persons were still intact. On the other hand, the Congress officials were neither ready to fight the election themselves, nor agreed to help us. All our appeals to them to save Congress fell on deaf ears. As we have no intention to keep Congress in our hands—they said—or to take any office therein—we don't want to bother about

the fate of the Provincial Congress.

In the circumstances we had no other alternative but to fight the Congress election ourselves. But in this too we were thwarted on every step by the Congress office. However, by tactfully handling of the affairs, in the end we were able to secure working majority in the second compromise-election of the Province-though we could not eliminate the undesirable element altogether.

It was only after this success in Congress election, that we could get breathing time to concentrate on our Assembly election work, and hence could pay no attention to the further attempts, which were being made, behind the screen by interested persons. We could know all about these things only when—like a bolt from blue—we read the latest decision of Vallabhbhai Patel, setting aside the election of our Provincial Congress in a manner that would give sure majority to the party which was, with great difficulty, kept out so long. We at once appealed to Vallabhbhai to reconsider his decision, but he was adamant, not caring a bit for our difficulties. Thus forced again to divert our energies, we again prepared to fight the fresh elections and attended the meeting called by the old P.C.C. for the purpose. But there was another hoax in store for us, a brief account of which you will find in the enclosure.

In the face of this difficulty, we had no other way for protecting the Board and its work, but to elect formally a Provincial Congress Committee, in which, due to the above reasons, all the districts have joined us, as will be evident from the accompanying documents.

In short, this is the whole history of our affairs, and as it is quite probable, that the interested persons in the other committee—some of whom unfortunately belong to Jamnalal Bajaj's paid group and have undue influence over Vallabhbhai—shall try to create further difficulties at this critical stage of Assembly elections—in order to undo—what we have achieved so far, we are forced to request you to exercise your influence in stopping any such attempts, at least till the Assembly elections are over. By the way, I may assure you, that if an impartial enquiry is instituted, all the facts which I have detailed above, can be proved to the hilt, mostly by the records of the Provincial Congress itself.

Thanking you in anticipation and expecting an immediate attention.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
B.S. Pathik



End of a struggle: This photograph was taken immediately after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed in 1930. In the picture are M. A. Ansari, S. Vallabhbhai Patel, Pt. Nehru, Sri Prakasa, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari, Pattabhi Sitarammaya, Jamnalal Bajaj, Asaf Ali, S. D. Chattopadhyaya and others.

Enclosure :

Ajmer
20.10.1934

A mammoth Ajmer citizens meeting was held at Madargate last night under the auspices of a newly elected Provincial Congress. Messrs. Arjunlal Sethi, Gaurishanker Bhargava, Baba Narsinghdas, Jamaluddin 'Makhmoor' and Swami Kumaranand addressed the meeting up to 1 P.M. Speakers thoroughly exposed the machinations of anti-Congress candidates responsible for the Congress dissensions and aimed at sabotaging the Congress nominee for Assembly. They strongly condemned Haribhau Upadhyaya group's alliance with saboteurs merely to secure majority and offices. Baijnath Mahodaya interjected several times but the public hooted him down. Later he was allowed to reply but he could make out no case and left the meeting abruptly. The following resolution was then passed unanimously:

"This meeting of Ajmer citizens strongly condemns hoax and deception played by Haribhau Upadhyaya and colleagues on members of Provincial Congress and All-India Congress Committee and wants to make it clear that people of Ajmer are not prepared to accept the so-called Provincial Congress Committee declared by them and elected only in their brains.

This meeting also appeals to the Working Committee of the National Congress not to recognise this committee."

135. From Asaf Ali

TELEGRAM

Bombay
22.10.1934

YOUR SPEECH HAD ITS EFFECT NOW COMMUNAL PROPAGANDA STARTED KINDLY SECURE SPECIAL MESSAGES FROM MAHATMAJI SARDAR RAJEN BABU RAJGOPALACH-

ARI¹ MRS NAIDU NARIMAN MAULANA ABDUL GHAFAR KHAN AND OTHERS STOP AKKA MUST WIRE HER GENERAL APPEAL AND SPECIALLY FOR WOMEN

ASAF ALI

1. 1879-1972; educated in Central College, Bangalore, Presidency College and Law College, Madras; chairman, Salem Municipal Council, 1917-19; joined satyagraha campaign, 1919; and the non-cooperation movement; general secretary, Indian National Congress, 1921-22, and member, Congress Working Committee, throughout the non-cooperation campaign; imprisoned in 1922 and 1930; prime minister, Government of Madras in charge of Home and Finance Portfolio, July 1937—November 1939; assisted Gandhi in the negotiations with Jinnah in September 1944; member, Governor-General's Council, September 1946—15 August 1947.

136. To Bansi Dhar

**Bombay
22.10.1934**

Dear Mr. Bansi Dhar Vakil,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 16th October desiring me to visit Beawar to address an election meeting or if that is not possible to send a message in support of the Congress candidate. On the 12th of this month I telegraphed the following message in support of your candidate addressed to the Secretary, Provincial Parliamentary Board, Ajmer. It seems that either it has not been utilised for the purpose for which I was asked to send it or you would surely have known about it and therefore, I am repeating it here.

"I appeal Ajmer voters support Congress candidate. Every vote cast for Congress candidate would hasten liberation of India. Every vote cast against and in support of those who have helped Government to forge fresh fetters would prolong our slavery."

As regard my visiting Beawar, I do not know when I would be free from work here and return to the north. At any rate, it would not be possible before the 8th of November. From that time onwards to the day of polling in Delhi, I shall be required there. But, if it would be

at all possible to spare a day, I would try to come to Beawar. But please do not take it as a promise and do not publish this until I have given you a definite promise.

With the best good wishes for the Congress candidate in Ajmer-Merwara.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

137. From Bansi Dhar

Beawar
23.10.1934

Dear Sir,

Respectfully we beg to submit that we have here long started in right earnest the election campaign in our Province and are firmly determined to face the fight boldly.

Owing to certain important reasons the situation has however become very critical. The strong opposition of the loyalist and capitalist candidates is a patent fact and the staunch communalism is also the order of the day as it is everywhere. But what is to be mostly deplored is the fact that there is a split in the Congress camp. The energy of the Congress workers has been very cleverly diverted by the agents of the opponents into different channels. The election disputes of the P.C.C. and D.C.C. and the ambition to play the role of dictators in Congress have monopolised the full share of their activities. The Congress has thereby lost whatever little prestige it has hitherto had in the hearts of people.

But this does not at all mean that the masses here are totally dead to the dignity of the cause that Congress has upheld, nor have they forgotten the noble and patriotic sacrifices that Congressmen have made. Nevertheless, some leaders of outstanding personality and reputation of both communities are needed to fan the fire of patriotism and mould the mass mentality to the right path and thereby restore the prestige of Congress in this province. If this is done, the victory is ours as the truth is on our side we believe.

It is therefore with regret that we are forced to seek cooperation and support from outside. As you are expected to attend the All-India

Congress at Bombay, it is high time, we presume, to make this humble request to grace us by your visit for a day to address an election meeting here while returning.

We earnestly hope that you will certainly oblige us by your willing and active support to the national cause.

Yours etc.,
Bansi Dhar

N.B. Please take this letter as urgent as telegram to save the unnecessary postage.

138. From Bhagwan Das

Chunar
24.10.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Your letter of the 20th came last evening. It would scarcely be right for me to withdraw my request to the Board, even after receiving Malaviyaji's letter. But the Board itself may very well decide to postpone consideration of my request till after the results of Malaviyaji's references to the Governor-General and the U.P. Governor are known, or the contest between Sri Prakasa and R.P. Bagla is decided on 9th November 1934, or both, or do what else it thinks fit to do in the circumstances. There is no hurry, for, unless I have been misinformed, I will not be able to resign now before I have been 'sworn in' as a member of the Assembly.

Yours sincerely,
Bhagwan Das

139. From Bansi Dhar

Beawar
24.10.1934

Dear Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your kind letter dated 22nd Oct. and the message as well. Unfortunately your telegraphic message of the 12th instant was not utilised by the

Ajmer people and hence arose the necessity of giving you the trouble to repeat the same.

However, you have not given us any definite promise about your coming here. The difficulty that you have mentioned is that you are not certain as to when you will be free from your Bombay work. Nevertheless this much is certain that some day or other you will leave for Delhi. As our polling day is 10th Nov., we think you can easily take this route and break your journey here for a few hours any day before the above noted date while returning from Bombay. We would not have given you this bit of trouble but for the fact that the situation has grown very critical here chiefly because of the recently occurred split in the Congress camp in connection with the elections of the PCC and DCC and the mighty opposition of the capitalists and loyalist candidates who are taking the fullest advantage of petty disputes, and fanning the fire of communalism in the province.

It is therefore that we earnestly request you again to give us your precious few hours any day you like. We are sanguine enough that you will surely oblige us by giving your definite promise and intimate us with the date, *etc.*

We are,
Yours etc.,
Bansi Dhar

140. From B.C. Roy

Calcutta
1.11.1934

My dear Ansari,

I wonder where you are now. I am sending this to Delhi in the hope that I shall catch you there tomorrow where on account of the public meeting at Delhi you are likely to be present.

On my return here I found that the financial conditions of our candidates in Bengal was deplorable, particularly as Pandit's candidates have, somehow or other, been supplied with enormous funds. Instead of having to find Rs. 13,000 for two candidates I have to find another

Rs. 8,000 for two others, Rs. 2,000 for the lower Assam candidate, Rs. 1,000 for the upper Assam candidate, making Rs. 24,000 in all. In addition to these I have sent to Bihar $10,000 + 7,000 = 17,000$. I have paid already Bengal and Assam candidates Rs. 10,000. I have to find another Rs. 14,000, *i.e.*, Rs. 41,000 in all. Under the circumstances, I could not possibly leave Calcutta for Shillong as I intended doing. And what is more, this decision of Rajendra Babu to cut off one seat from Bengal in the Working Committee, has upset the spleen of Bengal. Two persons (Bengalees) who had nothing to do with politics but who promised to give me loans refused point blank to give anything for candidates outside Bengal. You see I have already raised Rs. 25,000 from the bank; I cannot raise more as I have reached the limit. My only hope was to get other sympathisers to give me money on loan. They tell me to my face that as the Congress authorities refuse to recognise Bengal and give it a place (they do not think Maulana represents Bengal), they would also refuse to help me in this, and I have yet to find another 14 to 15,000 for Bengal and Assam. Therefore I have reluctantly to give up the idea of raising money for U.P. They have got Rs. 15,000 from Bhulabhai and will get Rs. 12,500 from you. I hope they will manage the rest somehow. I have wired to Rajendra Babu, Babu Sri Prakasa and Mohanlal Saxena and I am sending copies of this letter to Bhulabhai and Vallabhbhai who are due to arrive there tomorrow.

Yours sincerely,
B.C. Roy

141. From Sri Prakasa

Farrukhabad
2.11.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

After leaving Bombay, I entered my constituency and am wandering about from place to place. I see in the papers that you are also touring. I have to write and trouble you for money on behalf of the Parliamentary Board. I have already overdrawn nearly Rs. 15,000 on my personal responsibility for the U.P. Congress Parliamentary Committee,

and demands for money are insistent as the election day approaches. I shall be obliged if you will very kindly arrange to credit to my account (on behalf of this Committee) in the Benares Bank Ltd., Benares, all the money that may be available, to enable me to meet the expenses of the various candidates still in the field.

I am really sorry to trouble you; but my own position has become so precarious, owing to extraordinary heavy public expenses during the last few years, that it is impossible for me to take up any financial responsibility at present, otherwise I should never have worried you.

As I requested you at Bombay, the money may kindly be sent direct to my Bank as I shall be wandering about and may not be available at Benares to look to correspondence.

Thanking you and hoping all is well with you,

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

142. From Agatha Harrison¹

2, Cranbourne Court,
Albert Bridge Road S.W. 11
Battersea 2400
3.11.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

This letter will reach you at very busy time—you will be in the thick of elections, and probably have little time to give it thought. But what I am writing is in the nature of an S.O.S. to you. The idea came to me last night after reading the debate in the House on Sir Austen Chamberlain's² resolution on the publication of the Report.

¹Agatha Harrison was a prominent Y.W.C.A. and Welfare Worker, who went to India as an assistant to Miss Beryl Power, a member of the Royal Commission on Labour in India, 1929-31. She was Secretary of the Indian Conciliation Group which criticised the Government's policy of promising reforms on the one hand while pursuing a policy of repression on the other.

²1863-1937; M.P., 1892-1937; chancellor of the Exchequer 1903-5 and 1919-21; secretary of state for India 1915-17; member of the War Cabinet 1918; foreign secretary 1924-29; First Lord Admiralty 1931.

As soon as this appears on the 22nd of November, the whole press here will devote itself—depending on the particular point of view—to showing how it goes either too far, or not far enough. Feeling will run high. Meanwhile from your end there will be the attitude that will be taken by various sections. I recall that when the White Paper was issued, cabled reports appeared of what various leaders of parties said. The public here—not knowing the respective strength of these parties, or the weight of influence of the individuals—got the idea of general dissatisfaction, but were left with the idea: “Well of course they are making a fuss, but in the end they will work it.” Most of the responsible Congress leaders were in prison at the time, or taking the attitude of ignoring the whole thing. So the strength of that opinion, never reached us. You can say truly—“But you have the Manifesto we issued with the clear setting forth of our position.” This is so. But almost at the same time you issued this, came the news of the split in Congress ranks, and more recently Mr. Gandhi’s resignation—and the result is that no clear idea stands out in front of the public.

You saw quite clearly when you were here how things stood. I would now ask you to visualise the need at this end. Two things could be done as I see it.

(1) That after the Report is published you issue something—say to the *Manchester Guardian*.

(2) *That Congress should consider an appeal—or if that term does not seem a fitting term—a statement to the British public.* Someone suggested to me it should be addressed to the public through a person—say the Prime Minister or even the King. *But the main point surely is that something direct should come from your quarter that would command attention here and be in the possession of men and women at a time when the only thing they will be reading and hearing will be the pros and cons of the Report as it is.* The fact that the national party of India will have nothing to do with it will not be heard. If this suggestion seems practical—could such an appeal be signed by Mahatmaji, you and Babu Rajendra Prasad? The kind of thing I have in mind is this.

(1) *A very brief review of the unrepresentative way the R.T. Conference were built – that for the most part while the deliberations were going on for a new constitution, the chief political party was in prison and had no part in the making of this.*

(2) *A brief summary of why the Report is entirely impossible.*

(3) *Your counter suggestion for a Constituent Assembly.*

(4) *An account of your machinery in the Congress Parliamentary Board.*

As the days go by, I find in many circles a need expressed for having more detailed information of your "next steps" in demanding this Constituent Assembly. One can stress the situation and plead for imagination of a party that during the past years has been disrupted by imprisonment, bans, censorship, etc., and point out that the work of rebuilding the fabric of a great organisation and facing an election at the same time—is a staggering task. But now more is needed. After your elections are over, I take it that information of this kind will come to hand.

In brief, what I am trying to say is this. *Will you do as you promised when here, and after the elections are over send to the Manchester Guardian a review of the position as a result of the elections?* This could be reprinted and given wider circulation after.

Then—say a week after the report is issued (giving time for the first outburst here to be over) send this Appeal, or Statement to the British public?

Remember how we shall be placed. Cabled news of the reaction in India will come. Two weeks later the Indian papers will arrive with fuller details. *Something direct is needed.*

I repeat you may feel this is useless. But will you trust my judgment when I say we desperately need help. I am fully aware that whatever is done must in the last resort be done in India. At the present moment though, public opinion is a large factor here.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Mahatmaji and Rajendra Prasad. I hope it all does not sound incoherent to you—but I am writing against time.

Yours very sincerely,
Agatha Harrison

Dear Asaf,

Please prepare a good review of the position of the Congress in the country and in relation to Govt. as a result of elections to be sent to Miss Harrison, *Manchester Guardian*. I want to send a copy to Babu Rajendra Prasad tomorrow or day after.

M.A.A.

143. From Sri Prakasa

Allahabad
6.11.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I got here last night on my way back to Benares after visiting all the districts of my constituency. I receive here a telegram from Cawnpore saying you want me to send some reliable person to meet you at Delhi on the morning of the 7th. I am sending my friend Mr. Vishwanath Sharma for any instructions that you urgently like to give. You will perhaps remember him.

I hope you will be able to send with him a substantial sum of money as all our work is coming to a standstill owing to lack of funds. Everybody is feeling anxious as the polling day approaches. Dr. B. C. Roy has wired saying he can send nothing; and, as I have already informed you, I have overdrawn over Rs. 15,000/- on my bank account. I am naturally very nervous in my present position. Insistent demands are coming from every place.

It would not be safe to bring money in cash. You will please issue a cheque which Vishwanath Sharma will bring away. I shall cash it at Benares. If your Delhi bank would give a draft on the Benares Bank Ltd., Benares, that would be still better as that would save me commission.

Hoping all is well. With respects,

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

144. From Mohanlal Saxena

Lucknow
6.11.1934

My dear Doctor Sahib,

As desired by you, I am sending the bearer of this, Prof. Ram Saranji of Kashi Vidyapith, to take the money. Sri Prakasaji is on tour and your telegram to him was redirected to Cawnpore.

Dr. Bidhan Roy has refused to give us money. We are in great difficulty, our work is likely to be greatly dislocated and hampered. We

had wired to Bhulabhai and Sardar Patel; but to no purpose. I, therefore, request you to kindly arrange to send an additional sum of Rupees five thousand or as much as you can. We are aware of your difficulties but there being no other way out I am writing to you. The papers report that you had fallen ill. I hope you are better.

Yours,
Mohanlal Saxena

145. From G.B. Pant¹

Darbhanga
7.11.1934

My dear Doctor Saheb,

I am concerned to hear of your indisposition. It is presumably due to over-work: you had to exert yourself strenuously and ceaselessly since you landed at Bombay. Let me hope that you are free from fever now.

I regret the necessity of embarrassing you in your present condition. As you may be remembering, it was finally settled at Worli that our Province would receive a contribution of Rs. 12,500 from you, 5,000 from Dr. Roy and 2,500 more from Bhulabhaiji. I was astonished to hear on my return from Bombay that Dr. Roy had wired to Mohanlal and Sri Prakasa on the day the personnel of the Working Committee appeared in the Press that he would not be able to spare any money for us. I wired back to Dr. Roy, stating the circumstances and imploring him not to desert us, but have not been favoured with any reply. I sent telegrams to others also but with no result.

I took special care to make our position perfectly clear at Calcutta in August and again at Wardha in September. We declined to set up any candidate from our Province in the absence of a definite arrangement for the supply of necessary funds. It was only after this condition had been fulfilled and financial responsibility clearly allocated and

¹Govind Ballabh Pant (1887-1961); member, U.P. Legislative Council 1923; leader, Swaraj Party, U.P. Legislative Council 1923-30; elected to the Legislative Assembly 1934 and was Deputy-Leader of the Congress Party; chief minister of Uttar Pradesh; joined Union Government and served as Home Minister till his death in 1961.

undertaken that our candidates gave their consent. I was fully conscious of the difficulties confronting us and left no room for any doubt. According to the Wardha settlement which was final, absolute and unconditional, Dr. Roy promised to provide Rs. 10,000 for our Province. At Bombay you exonerated him to the extent of half and reduced this liability from ten to five. He refuses to honour even this undertaking. We are already subject to serious financial handicaps. We have been very watchful and economical and have throughout observed care and caution. There is, however, an irreducible minimum beyond which one cannot possibly go. We are on the very eve of the elections and dislocation at this stage can only serve as God-send to our opponents. I need not dwell upon the appalling consequences of failure of requisite supplies at this juncture. On the basis of this arrangement, we gave solemn assurances to various candidates and their numerous supporters, and if we fail them at this last moment we will not only be spoiling our chances at the polls but also laying ourselves open to the charge of betrayal of faith in this Province. It is bound to cause irreparable harm to us as well as to the cause we hold dear, if we are left in the lurch. Dr. Roy may be faced with difficulties but commitments once made have to be honoured at all costs and cannot be brushed aside or varied at one's pleasure. There is, however, not a moment to lose. Elections have absorbed every moment of our time and energy for weeks and it will be highly deplorable if we are baulked of the fruits of our labours on account of this default. I hope you will appreciate the situation and save us from the impending disaster. Polling comes off on the 12th instant and we want five thousand promised by Dr. Roy at the latest on 9th. I expect to reach Agra on 9th.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Govind Ballabh Pant

146. From Vallabhbhai Patel

Bombay
11.11.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I have returned here this morning after a strenuous tour in the Punjab, Delhi, U.P. and Bihar. Excepting Bihar where I had to spend 5 days to counteract the activities of Malaviyaji, Bhulabhai was with me and

he has given you a general idea of our work there. At Delhi we missed you so much and I received your telegram about your illness at Hyderabad which upset us both. Dr. Bidhan has failed us in the nick of time and Govind Ballabh Pant most hurriedly upset the whole affair. So was Rajen Babu to some extent. Govind Ballabh Pant met me at Patna. In order to avoid a breakdown we have arranged to advance a sum of Rs. 5,000 to Govind Ballabh Pant which he was expecting from Bidhan and Rs. 2,500 to Rajen Babu expecting that we will be able to adjust things after the elections are over. A further sum of Rs. 2,500 had also to be given to Bihar on account of unforeseen difficulties having cropped up suddenly. My tour in Bihar has been very successful and Rajen Babu has been thoroughly satisfied with the work.

On my return here this morning, I read in the papers that you have been able to knock off your fever and have joined us in active work. I am glad to hear that you went to Ajmer and hope that you had a good response. Bhulabhai has gone to his constituency today and will be back after the election is over on the 15th. I have come here to help our friends in Bombay in the last three days.

You must have learnt about our work in Delhi from Asaf Ali. I hope that his work is now fairly smooth and that there will be no real difficulty in his way.

We have begun well from Assam as appears from the reports in the Press and we will probably have similar results almost everywhere.

Maniben had gone to your place to meet Zohra. Hoping that you are doing well.

Yours sincerely,
Vallabhbhai

147. From Sri Prakasa

Cawnpore
11.11.1934

My dear Doctor Sahib,

Vishwanath Sharma has come back from Delhi and I met him here. I am concerned to learn from him that you were not able to send any money with him. He must have explained the whole situation to

you. In fact this lack of money has considerably handicapped us at this last moment when the poll is to be taken tomorrow and all money has been spent.

The fact is that, as I told you at Bombay and repeated in my letter, I have already overdrawn a sum of Rs. 15,000 on my personal responsibility, on the account of the Parliamentary Committee. This I have done on the strict understanding that the money was to be paid back almost immediately. I naturally depended on the promise of the Board to pay the stipulated amount. Demands have come to me during the last few days from various centres. Naturally I was not prepared to take any further financial risks and I had to withhold my hands. If your money had come, our work for tomorrow's poll would have been much more vigorous and would have given us heart to take some further risks. As it is, we are down at the last moment. In any case, I must request you to send all the money you can at once to my account at the Benares Bank Ltd., Benares, so that the old liabilities might be met and I might not lose my credit with bankers. I have no resources of my own left from which to meet these bankers. You can understand my intense anxiety on that score. The money might be sent by draft or cheque.

Hoping you are feeling better.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

148. From Sri Prakasa

Benares
13.11.1934

Dear Doctor Ansari,

I returned from Cawnpore in the small hours of this morning when I got your telegram of the 10th in which you say you have sent Rs. 2,500 to the Benares Bank and another Rs. 2,500 to Mr. Sherwani for Mr. Kazimi. So far all our Congress candidates in the U.P. have received money on behalf of the Congress Parliamentary Board through the U.P. Provincial Congress Committee and none of them has given ;

anything direct. I do not know what Mr. Kazimi had already got and whether or not he was entitled to get the extra amount you have sent to him.

You will have received my last letter from Cawnpore in which I again explained to you the whole situation. I am telling you below the exact position. I have so far received Rs. 17,500 from Mr. Bhulabhai. I have overdrawn Rs. 15,000 on my own responsibility. All this money making a total Rs. 32,500 has been disbursed among the 11 seats—8 non-Muslim and 3 Muslim—that we are contesting. There will be at least another 2,500 to pay when the final bills come in. This makes a total of Rs. 35,000. As I have said above, Rs. 17,500 have already been received by me from Mr. Bhulabhai and I was given to understand that I was to expect Rs. 12,500 from you and 5,000 from Dr. Bidhan Roy, making a total of another Rs. 17,500. It was on this understanding that I overdrew my bank balance so heavily and unless I get the money soon I shall not know how to clear off this account. My promise to the bank is that I shall be clearing the whole amount within a few days. I am sure you will help me in the matter by sending the whole of the balance remaining with you and also making Dr. Bidhan Roy pay his promised contribution.

I am very sorry to trouble you but I am sure you will understand the situation and sympathize with my difficulties. The non-Muslim polls were already taken yesterday and Muslim polls are on today. The agony will now be over but I fear there will be heavy bills to pay. May I hope to have an early and favourable reply from you. I trust you are by now completely recovered in health and spirit.

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

149. From Syed Abdullah Brelvi

Bombay
24.11.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I had expected this. You did not, as arranged, halt at Bombay on your way from Hyderabad. I was, therefore, very sorry to learn that you had been laid up with fever at Hyderabad and had to cancel your visit here. I hope you will be coming here next month.

The election results throughout the country are most gratifying but, in my view, they are not unexpected. There is not the least doubt that during the last few years the Congress has had a tremendous hold over the people. If only we could get a satisfactory alternative to the Communal Award, we could get the Muslims also on the side of the Congress. The Unity Board has not fared very well and it is a pity that men like Sir Mohammad Yaqub and Shafi Daudi could not be defeated. Dr. Hamid here has also failed. He had assured me that he had very good support. If I had known that his calculations were too optimistic I would, for my part, have dissuaded him from putting himself forward as a candidate. He has been badly beaten and is perhaps the only Muslim candidate set up by the Congress who has been defeated, Tassaduq being the only one to succeed. Poor Munshi! He worked the hardest and most gallantly and mere accident deprived him of the success that was his due. It is, however, a great consolation that Dr. Deshmukh has topped the poll. The most gratifying success is, of course, that of Asaf Ali.

Now the question is: What is the Congress going to do about the Joint Committee's Report?¹ It will, of course, reject it. But I think the Working Committee should pass a resolution giving briefly the reasons why it should be rejected and, as an alternative, put forward a well-formulated scheme of a Constituent Assembly. Hitherto the talk about the Constituent Assembly has been, rightly, mostly in the air. Now, we must put our scheme before the country. And I suggest that the two resolutions of the Working Committee (which naturally will also be the resolution of the Parliamentary Board) dealing with the J.P.C. Report and the Constituent Assembly (including the National Demand) should be passed simultaneously in every town in India just as the Independence Resolution was passed on Jan. 26, 1928.

Prof. K.T. Shah had undertaken to send the complete manuscript of his lectures delivered at Delhi University by the end of this month. He says he will not be able to do so for a week or two now, especially as I have asked him to write a series of special articles on the J.P.C. Report. May I therefore, request you to telephone to the Vice-Chancellor requesting him to ask the Registrar to write to Prof. Shah that he may send the manuscript by the 15th of Dec.?

I hope Basit is now in Delhi and has improved in health. My love to both of you and Farid.

Yours,
Brelvi

¹The Report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Reforms was released for publication on 22 November 1934.

150. From Sri Prakasa

Benares Cantt.
21.11.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I am sorry to have to write to you to say that the Bank has now started dunning me for the repayment of all their dues which now stand at the enormous figure of nearly Rs. 16,000. You will please remit your share to me as soon as you possibly can and also ask Dr. Bidhan Roy to do the same. All the monies, in accordance with my understanding with the Bank, have to be paid up by the end of this month; and there are only a few days left. I am sure you will very kindly look into the matter and save me from embarrassment. I am so sorry to trouble you but there is no help. I hope you will please excuse me.

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

151. From G.B. Pant

Haldwani
25.11.1934

My dear Doctor Sahib,

I sent you a letter from Patna early this month and a telegram from Nainital soon after the polling in this Province. Trust you got both in ordinary course.

I received your wire yesterday and wired back forthwith. The number of voters in this constituency stands at about 23,000.

Please allow me to offer you my hearty congratulations on the splendid success of the Congress in the Assembly elections. It has, in fact, exceeded our best expectations and calculations. The country has veered round the Congress in a notable manner and this national triumph has been hailed with delight by the people everywhere. It is particularly welcome at this stage when not a few among us were depressed and even despondent. The Congress candidates have swept the polls in every province except Bengal. I hope that our strength will not fall

short of fifty and we will have allies in other groups. The nationalists are expected to make a common cause with the Congress party in all matters political. I think on the whole we will be starting under better auspices than the Swaraj Party.

Mr. Kazimi has just seen me. He is somewhat worried over the publication of his name in the list of successful Congress candidates. He was undoubtedly an approved nominee of the Congress and even now he has no desire to deviate from his promise or pledge. It appears, however, that he had not taken all of his workers and supporters into confidence because of the delicacy of the situation and now he apprehends that if prominence is given to his membership of the Congress party from this moment and so soon after the election it may be used as a handle by the opposite party to prejudice him in the eyes of the electorate. I have told him that I have no desire to embarrass him in any way and I would refrain from doing anything tending to add to his difficulties. I had warned him at the outset. The position is not free from complications and intricacies. But still I am quite willing to do what I can to ease the situation. I have accordingly written to Mohanlal not to include Kazimi's name in any statement that he may issue to the Press. I understand that Kazimi will be a loyal member of our party in the Assembly. Only he wishes the formal announcement to be deferred. I do not see any objection to this. He is coming to you and the decision rests with you.

I have received a number of letters from Sri Prakasa. He is deeply exercised over the amount he has borrowed for us from the Bank. Being a director himself, his action is irregular and he is naturally worried and uneasy. He may have written to you. I know you are apprised of the situation and should be equally anxious with me to relieve his anxiety.

Kazimi has received at least 700 more than the maximum he expected from us. We had been making necessary contributions but you sent 2,500 for him to Sherwani direct. I have requested him to refund this 700. May I appeal to you to remit the promised amount to Sri Prakasa?

Trust you are keeping fit in spite of overwork. With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Govind Ballabh

152. From R.S. Hulerker

26.11.1934

Sir,

I offer the following two suggestions for your consideration:

(1) There should be a Provincial Parliamentary Board for every province. It should work under the instructions of the All India Board. The Board should set up candidates for the various local bodies and provincial councils, carry on necessary propaganda and settle local election disputes amongst Congress candidates.

(2) There should be a clear mandate from your Board regarding the capturing of local bodies.

In my Province there are two divergent views amongst responsible workers. One party holds that if Congressmen try to enter local bodies, they will create parties, incur displeasure of many Congress sympathisers, will adopt mean tactics to capture seats and will thus bring the organisation into disrepute. The other party considers that the local bodies offer many opportunities to serve the masses and to create national spirit amongst them. They are the first steps to Swaraj and unless we make them our own, we shall not be able to carry on our policies formed in the Legislative Councils.

The local bodies come in constant touch with the people in rural areas. The Government with the help of broadcasting and their proposed scheme of village uplift are trying to capture the imagination of the village people. At such a juncture we have no other speedy and cheap means to be in touch with the villages. No doubt Mahatmaji's village improvement scheme is there but it is a slow though a sure method of approaching the masses.

I would, therefore, request you to issue clear instructions in the above matter to the various provincial Congress Committees.

Yours sincerely,
R.S. Hulerker

P.S. As most of the local bodies elections will take place in 1935 in Karnataka, I request you will treat this matter as urgent.

153. Statement :

Delhi
26.11.1934

With barely two months in which to organise itself and to mobilise public opinion, the Congress challenged Government for the verdict of the country on three issues, *viz.*, the policy of the so-called reforms, the policy of repression, and the national demand for a Constituent Assembly. The appeal was, as is well-known, restricted to a small electorate of about 10 to 12 lakhs of persons who have got what is called, a stake in the country. But, in spite of the factors that worked against the Congress, and difficulties which can easily be appreciated by a democratic people, the results of the recent elections to the Assembly¹ offer overwhelming proof of the supremacy of the Congress and the political ideals that it represents. Out of 106 elected seats, the Congress can claim between 70 to 80 direct and indirect supporters of its policy and programme. For, the Congress Nationalist Hindus, the Members of the Muslim Unity Board, Sikhs and a large number of independents differ from the Congress, which I may emphasise not on any fundamentals, but, almost only on the correct approach to the Communal Award which nobody likes. This is the second most prominent feature of the elections to the Assembly; the first being, the fact that the proportion of the votes cast in the country for the Congress nominees as against others is as 2 to 1. An analysis of the voting and the results, will reveal the following among other outstanding features of the recent elections to the Assembly.

(1) The extinction of (a) The Justice Party, (b) The Liberal Party, and (c) The Hindu Mahasabha.

(2) The rout of the Round-Tablers generally.

(3) The decisive defeat of Sir Shanmukham Chetty or in other words the defeat of the Ottawa Pact.

(4) The open disinclination even among Muslims to support the British Government in its political, commercial, and economic intentions towards India.

(5) The decisive stand made against all odds by the people of the N.W.F.P. in support of the Congress and the return by an absolute

¹The Congress achieved a phenomenal success at the elections. It captured all seats in Madras, Orissa, U.P. and the Central Provinces which were open to general electorates. The party lost two seats in the Punjab, three in Bengal, and one each in Bombay and Ajmer. Out of these seven, four were lost to Congressmen of the Nationalist Party organised by Aney and Malaviya.

and convincing majority of Dr. Khan Sahib, whom the Government have exiled along with his brother, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, from his province, and whom they did not allow to visit his home even for the election campaign.

The verdict of the country is unmistakable. It is, indeed, too glaringly obvious to be denied even by the worst opponents and enemies of India. The election has exploded the myth of the Round Table Conference and dug up the very foundations on which the proposed constitution is based. India now demands through its elected representatives, the determination of her constitution by a Constituent Assembly of the representatives of the people and not jerrymandered by a few Indians howsoever eminent, who otherwise were handpicked by the bureaucracy.

**Voting Strength of various Parties in Non-Muslim
and Joint Electorates**

<i>Place</i>	<i>Congress</i>	<i>Congress Nationalists</i>	<i>Justice Party</i>	<i>Maha- sabha</i>	<i>Indepen- dents</i>	<i>Mus- lim Con- ference</i>
Madras	1,48,793	—	25,607	4,469	2,455	—
Punjab	8,782	1,745	—	6,245	—	—
Ajmer	1,325	—	—	—	3,570	—
N.W.F.P.	2,888	1,072	—	—	—	1,519
C.P.						
[Hindi]	15,578	2,169	—	—	—	—
C.P.						
[Marathi]	4,547	2,431	—	—	—	—
Berar	—	6,952	—	—	357	—
Orissa	6,093	—	—	—	1,201	—
Assam	7,790	3,776	—	1,283	—	—
Delhi	3,424	—	—	—	949	—
Bihar	33,574	3,100	—	343	2,960	—
Bengal	6,247	13,395	—	1,383	1,223	—
Bombay	36,887	5,607	—	—	18,140	—
Gujrat	24,291	—	—	1,484	—	—
Karnataka	14,917	—	—	—	7,238	—
Maharashtra						
	17,638	—	—	—	12,834	—
Sind		5,501	—	2,492	4,468	—

		<i>Nationalist Agriculturist Party</i>			<i>Liberals</i>	
U.P.	56,550	—	6,567	—	386	7,203
	3,89,324	48,748		17,699	55,781	
Congress	—	—	3,89,324			
Congress Nationalists			48,748	Congress	—	3,89,324
Justice Party		—	25,607	Other Parties		1,63,124
Mahasabha		—	17,699			
Independents		—	55,781			
Liberals		—	7,203			
Nationalist Agri. Party		—	6,567			
Muslim Conference		—	1,519			
			5,52,448			

No candidate was set up by Congress in Berar and Sind. 6 Congress candidates have been returned unopposed (1 in Bihar, 4 in U.P. and 1 in C.P.). 3 results are still to be published (2 in Bengal and 1 in Bihar).

<i>Sikhs</i>	Shiromani Akali Dal	7964
	Independents	3570

Muslim Constituencies

<i>Place</i>	<i>Congress</i>	<i>Unity Board</i>	<i>Ahrar Party</i>	<i>Khilafat</i>	<i>League Conference</i>	<i>Amarat Sharia</i>	<i>Inde- pendents</i>
Punjab	—	—	2,619	—	4,555	—	3,173
U.P.	5,071	4,932	—	—	4,445	—	6,977
Madras	2,174	3,416	—	—	—	—	4,168
Bihar	—	2,172	—	—	2,541	665	—
C.P.	—	241	—	—	—	—	1,506
Sind	—	—	—	6,745	6,945	—	9,328
Poona	269	504	—	—	—	—	1,076
	7,514	11,265	2,619	6,745	18,486	665	26,228

The Muslims who would vote for the Congress include the candidates set up by

(1) The Congress						
(2) The Unity Board	—	—	—	—	—	28,808
(3) The Khilafat						
(4) The Amarat Sharia						

The Muslims who would vote against the Congress consist of the candidates set up by

(1) The Muslim League Conference	—	—	—	44,714
(2) The Independents				

Bengal results not yet published.

154. From Iswar Saran

Allahabad
30.11.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

There are so many difficult matters for the Parliamentary Board to decide. Now take the first thing that has to be decided. Whom are we going to put forward for the Presidentship of the Assembly? My own idea is that we may propose Sir Abdur Rahim. There are two advantages. (1) It will be a most friendly gesture. We have to serve Hindu-Muslim unity at any cost. Of course in certain quarters there will be severe criticism but what does that matter? (2) There will be a prospect of our getting Government support as well. I may be wrong but this is how the matter strikes me at the moment.

Why can't we allow Sir Abdul Matin Chawdhri to continue as the Deputy-President? I know him. He is a good fellow.

We have to be very clear as regards our attitude to the Report of the Joint Select Committee. We are using the word "reject" quite freely. What does that mean? I am utterly opposed to the scheme but I want Congress to adopt a consistent, logical and dignified attitude. What we should say is this. We are thoroughly dissatisfied with the Report, nothing will reconcile Congress to it but we are going to use it in order to get to our goal. Otherwise, we lay ourselves open to the charge of rejecting something which Government has not asked us to accept. Frankly, I don't like the word "reject".

Then there are matters of party discipline. We should profit by the experience of the Swaraj Party. Definite rules should be laid down and no departure from them should be allowed.

(1) Will Congressmen serve on your matters and your missions? I think they should.

(2) No walk-outs should be allowed. They are undignified, to say the least of it.

(3) Congress MLA's should not be allowed to go to official functions.

(4) Of course private functions stand on a different footing.

Very great care should be ever used in selecting our office-bearers in the Assembly. I was in the Assembly and I know the difficulty Pt. Motilalji had in keeping his team together. On the whole, I am inclined to the view that the leader of the party should have a powerful voice in the selection of his colleagues. This is a matter on which there can be no two opinions but I suggest that its importance should be recognised.

May I suggest the taking up of the question of the coming election to Provincial Councils? Congress committees have to be strengthened all over the country. The selection of proper candidates should begin to engage the attention of the Board.

The question of expense is becoming increasingly important. I must confess I am unable to offer any definite suggestions but I do feel that many Congressmen will find it difficult to bear this enormous expense of election.

It has to be noted that elections to Provincial Councils will be more difficult than the Assembly elections. Suppose a zamindar of influence stands, his influence will be difficult to combat in his own zamindari. In the Assembly election you should have influence in several divisions. Moreover zamindars are not very keen on election to the Assembly.

Foreign Propaganda—It is most important to have our representatives in New York, Geneva and London at least. The selection of suitable representatives and the collection of funds is full of difficulty. But it is a folly to ignore the force and effect of world opinion. I have tried myself to do a little of this kind of work and know its advantages as well as difficulties. I dare say you know that tons of money are spent on foreign propaganda against us. If it were valueless why should so much money have been spent over it?

Some people think that we shall have to have the Assembly soon. They feel that we shall be asked to resign and come away. If this idea gets abroad, the elections to local councils will become far more difficult.

These rambling ideas, I hope, may be of some use to you. I shall be happy, if they are. If any other ideas strike me, I will let you know. Now I assure you that my services are at the disposal of the Party.

With very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Iswar Saran

155. From Raghbir Sahai

Budaun
1.12.34

Dear Doctor Ansari,

I think after the publication of the R.T.C. Report, the time has come when the Congress Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board should make it clear that they do not consider themselves bound by the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. It was you, if my memory is not mistaken, who first of all broke the news to the country that while Mahatma Gandhi was attending the RTC in London, the Govt. of India was hatching the ordinances which were promulgated soon after his return. That showed how far Govt. was prepared to honour the Pact. Since then so many things have come to light showing the intentions of the Govt. The safeguards in the White Paper and in the J.L.C. Report are not obviously in India's interest and the scheme of Federation is as impracticable as it is reactionary. Mahatma Gandhi then agreed to safeguards and federation by way of compromise and under the impression that perhaps in both the matters India's wishes would be taken into consideration. No such thing has been done. On the other hand a studied attempt has been made to ignore India's unanimous demand and to foist a constitution on the country which nobody likes and which is as bad as it could be. What then should be done? We have got an opportunity to say that we do not want any safeguards whatsoever. Pure and unadulterated Swaraj is wanted. Federation too as the constitution foreshadows is not wanted. In fact the Congress should not feel bound any longer by the terms of the pact which was drawn in by way of compromise and under the belief that both sides were honestly actuated. The other side having given abundant proof of its being not so actuated, our duty is clear in the matter. The repudiation of the pact should be the first reply to the insult offered by J.L.C. Report. We must start on a clean slate and work for a more dignified settlement than the Gandhi-Irwin pact which the govt. had thrown to the winds long long ago.

I hope you will take this suggestion of mine into consideration while framing a definite policy for the Congress and the Parliamentary Board in connection with the Report.

Yours sincerely,
Raghbir Sahai

156. From T.A.K. Sherwani

**Aligarh
2.12.34**

My dear Ansari,

I am still in bed and am afraid I shall not be able to attend the meeting at Patna, which I would miss terribly. I have not received any agenda of the meeting but have learnt from the Press that the meeting has been called to settle our future policy and programme in the legislature. I wish I could discuss with you the whole situation before the meeting but that being impossible under the circumstances, I venture to put the following few points before you.

1. The Congress is conceived by many of us as a party amongst parties in India. I consider it absolutely a wrong conception. The Congress is and should be an All-India organisation in the nature of the Parliament of the nation. We cannot afford to have it as a party only, howsoever strong, so long as the foreign element is predominant in the governance of the country. There are two conflicting forces at work and those two should only be the basis of parties. I need not dilate upon that point as I believe that this was the point before Mahatmaji and before you all when you framed the new constitution at Bombay,¹ though unfortunately I was absent.

When you grant that, our programme and policy should be as free from and independent of the ideologies of the other parties in the Congress as possible. What I mean to say is that our programme should be that of a party within the Congress and not that of the Congress. In other words we must follow the policy of the Congress and must be guided by it as regards our general line of action but we must be left free as regards our immediate objectives. Therefore, when we lay down our programme and determine our policy we must do so as an individual party. I do not mind being called a right wing if it pleases others but we must have our individuality.

2. (a) Our aim should be to take power whatever and whenever we can, provided everybody who goes to the post goes there as a soldier. We have noticed it in the past fourteen years that leaving Government

¹The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha on 12-13 June, and again on 17-18 June at Bombay. It laid down a programme, the main items of which were production of *khaddar* through self-spinning, removal of untouchability, the promotion of communal harmony, of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs, and the promotion of education on national lines.

machinery intact does not pay us in the least. But in the past we had to do lot of demonstration and therefore we were otherwise busy, but in future that part of work which kept many of us busy will be very little and, therefore, we must have power or must continue the struggle for power all along the line. Direct action can go on for a limited period only at a time.

This strive for power becomes more urgent when we see the mentality of masses. They appreciate nothing so much as authority and when they once realise that their representatives can wield authority it will on the one hand encourage them tremendously to action and shall bring down the prestige of the bureaucracy on the other.

2. (b) Our experience has been that when objective obstacles are placed in our way, after some time they become insurmountable, a reaction sets in and we have to retreat. Our programme should be such as to enable us to create two fronts instead of one or at least to widen the front. This we can only do if we have an individuality of our own. Otherwise we shall have to retire from legislature as soon as the Congress resorts to direct action. Instead of my coming out of my own free will I would compel the Government to turn me out which they can only do by suspending the constitution. I cannot conceive of a better position for us. Considering these besides other minor points which I cannot in the present state of my health and as a matter of fact need not put in this letter, my emphatic opinion is that we must have a programme on the basis of an individual party within the Congress.

3. I think our office-bearers should not be selected just now. I am against such selection by the CPB much more by the CWC. The office-bearers should be selected by the members of the Assembly who should meet at least some 4 or 5 days before the session begins.

For the leadership nobody deserves better than Bhulabhai Desai.

There may be a move to vacate a seat for Malaviya. I think this would be a wrong move because if anybody resigns Malaviyaji will not be able to attend the session. His election will take at least three months. Therefore, if we have to vacate a seat for him we must do it after the session is over. Otherwise we shall lose a seat without giving anything.

I trust you will excuse me for this ramble.

In case you do not get this in time I am forwarding a copy to Bhulabhai at Patna.

Yours affectionately,
Tasadduq

157. From Ram Singh

Bannu
3.12.1934

Dear Doctor Sahib,

Thanks for your circular letter of the 29th November. As I received it only on the 2nd December my reply couldn't possibly reach you on the 3rd as required. The requisite information is, however, submitted and may be of use to you after your return from Patna.

As you are well aware, we had to work against heavy odds here, for on the one hand the Congress nominee was not allowed to enter the province and lead the election campaign personally and on the other, the body which set him up, was unlawful in the province, and to add to our difficulties two other candidates, one a Muslim and the other a Hindu, opposed him in this general constituency.

1. The total number of electors in the N.W.F.P. (General Constituency)	7,613
2. Total votes cast.	5,479

Each of the three candidates securing :—

1. Dr. Khan Sahib (Congress)	2,888
2. Raja Haider Zaman Khan (Muslim Conference)	1,519
3. L. Das Ram Bagai (Hindu Sabha)	1,072

3. Non-Congressmen raised the issue of Communal Award in the case of L. Das Ram Bagai, and the fourteen points of Mr. Jinnah in the case of Raja Haider Zaman Khan.

Non-Congressmen while raising the cry of "Hinduism in danger" and "Islam in danger" freely distributed money also towards buying the votes.

High government officials, for instance, K.B. Kulikan, Director of Publicity Bureau of the Frontier Government, toured the whole province and almost all the responsible district officials went round their respective districts about a month before the date of polling, and asked all *jagirdars*, *zamindars*, and *raises* etc. to exert their influence in favour of the government nominee as they call Raja Saheb.

4. (a) As whole of the province was fixed as one constituency and the electors were scattered in distant and out of the way villages, as also

the polling was to take place on one and the same day throughout the province, therefore more electors could not come to the polls than have actually done.

(b) Women were altogether eliminated here under the amended electoral rules.

5. Communal tension is not a living factor here.

6. In the N.W.F.P. the Congress organisation, though not regularly functioning at present, is very strong and effective, and I believe if Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan be allowed to enter the province before the council elections come off, the Congress would possess more than 80% seats here.

I must bring to your notice that the CPB did not perhaps pay as good attention to this province as it did to others and no all-India leader came here to help and guide us in the recent election campaign. The province expects and perhaps deserves better attention.

Yours sincerely,
Ram Singh

158. From Gopi Chand

Lahore
3.12.1934

Dear Doctorji,

I am highly obliged for yours dated 29.11.1934. I am sorry I cannot give you any information about some of the points, because I have no knowledge of the facts. Circumstances forced me to keep quiet during the elections. Therefore I have to be quiet about your question No. 1, 2 & 3 (a) & (4).

Q. No. 4. (a) More people did not go to the polling booth because (1) the organisation which carried on propaganda did not take much pains to organise the workers. They were satisfied with lectures.

All the voters were not approached. No duties were allotted to influential workers who ought to have induced voters to go on the polling day to booths and vote.

(2) There was lack of coordination between Congress workers and workers appointed by candidates.

(3) Some Congress sympathisers did not like the candidate, the selection being wrong.

For (b) I cannot offer any explanation. I am speaking for western Punjab constituency, and therefore, am offering my reasons for defeat of the Congress candidate.

(c) My reasons for defeat are these:

(1) the people at the helm of Congress affairs did not like to avail fully of work of those who did not agree with them in Congress elections, e.g., I was never called upon to offer any suggestions for carrying on election propaganda. I could not work openly because my brother was opposing a Congress candidate in spite of all my dissuading him. I did not work for him, nor against him. Some of my friends who were invited to a meeting of Congress workers tried to offer some suggestions and their services, but they got a snub and had to keep quiet. No Congress worker except perhaps in Sialkot worked against the Congress candidate. Excepting me, all workers did work and exerted as much as they were called upon to do.

(2) Lack of coordination between candidate, his workers and Congress workers.

(3) Selection of wrong candidates. A man who has never done anything for the Congress or the public, who did not withdraw in 1930 when Swarajists withdrew from the Assembly, who could be bribed by the Government, who had no scruples and who had no character was selected against one who was one of the top people of a communal organisation specially when a communal dispute was the election card. As I have stated above, many people did not go to the booth because they felt that casting a vote in his favour was not helping the Congress but really supporting 'what was very undesirable thing'. They felt that they would be discrediting the Congress by working for such a candidate as Dewan Chamanlal.¹

(4) Some people got disgusted owing to indecent and improper and undignified propaganda carried on by both Congress and non-Congress

¹B. 1892; member, Punjab Legislative Assembly, 1936-45. Central Legislature, 1945-46, Constituent Assembly, 1946-48; ambassador of India in Turkey, 1948-49; founded the English daily, *The Nation*.

candidates. I, for one, cannot but raise my voice, however weak it is, against the way in which the Congress candidate carried on the propaganda. The Congress claims to educate the masses. Is raising false accusations against the daughter of opposite candidate or indecent accusations against the candidate himself, the education we want to give to the masses? One of the objections raised at the time of scrutiny was that the opposing candidate was imprisoned for life for political work and that the sentence had not expired. This objection was raised by one who never thought of making any sacrifice however small it be for the country, who was not a *khadi* wearer even and who had always gained something personally and thus exploited the Congress.

(5) The feeling of most educated Hindus was against the attitude adopted by the Congress Working Committee about the Communal Award. Though the communal feeling was high, yet we could defeat the opponent and secure the seat if our candidate was a good one.

Q. No. 5: No caste question was raised in this constituency. The caste question was raised by a Congress candidate in another constituency and so also was the rural and urban question. The caste question was also raised by the opposite party in the third constituency.

The defeat in Assembly election shall go a long way against us in Council elections. The communal parties feel themselves very strong. Out of twelve seats we were contesting only three Hindu seats. We could not put up any Muslim or Sikh candidate. We lost two out of these three owing to our own fault. The Jullundur seat we could get unopposed, provided we were to nominate Raizada Hans Raj. He was not suggested by Punjab people as he was not in the good books of the Provincial Congress Government.

Therefore I would suggest that the Congress Parliamentary Board should try to come to an understanding with some important Muslims and Sikhs in this province by arriving at a common formula of communal settlement. I would also suggest the appointment of such a provincial Parliamentary Board on which people representing different political parties in the province are selected. No communal organisation should get a representative in this Board unless a settlement has been arrived at with them. This Board should consult local people and make their tentative selection now. We should start educating the masses from now on the lines the Congress wants to educate. We should preach nationalism as opposed to communalism. This Board should carry on the Provincial Council work themselves, of course with the aid of local district people, and should consult non-Congressmen also while making selections. This can only be done if

men like you and Sardar and others were to take personal and special interest in the matter.

With regards.

Yours sincerely,
Gopi Chand

P.S. Please treat it as confidential. These are my personal views.
G.C.

159. From S.C. Vasudev

Bhiwani
3.12.1934

Dear Sir,

I find from newspapers that Pandit Nekiram Sharma who poses himself as a Congress leader has written to you regarding the Ambala Division Legislative Assembly election. Without entering into the details of the career and work of Pandit Nekiram at great length, I place before you a few facts and trust you will take necessary action with a view to purify Congress politics and public life.

I fail to understand the cheek of Pandit Nekiram, who has consistently and purposely broken the Congress discipline and revolted against the Congress mandates at every Assembly election and now he approaches you as the President of the Parliamentary Board of Congress whose very orders he did not obey, to take disciplinary action against Lala Shamlal for certain imaginary false allegations of this great Pandit.

To many of us who know this Pandit all along, he is known to be using the Congress as a trade ware. He has no principles. At one time he joins a Home Rule Party. At another he becomes a *pucca* Hindu Sabhite, and then he changes his colour according to the times. Some time he is a responsivist and some time a *pucca* non-cooperator and civil resister. He has been dancing attendance upon certain leading men of Congress. He hoodwinked Mahatma Gandhiji, Sardar Patel and even Pandit Malaviyaji. Such men do more harm than good to the Congress cause. It is most unfortunate that the front benches of the Congress before taking any action do not try to know such people with whom politics are a means to the end.

It is true he can sing some songs well, but he knows next to nothing of politics. When such men are allowed to have front seats on the platform of the Congress and by the side of the great leaders, it is but natural that they take advantage of this and cast an awe upon the poor ignorant people. Pandit Nekiram is today a rebel in the Congress and the responsibility for emboldening him to do so lies with those big leaders, who allowed him all sorts of indulgences.

Even now no one proposes to take strong disciplinary action against him either in Punjab or within the Congress. If a small committee is appointed to examine his works and how he has benefited by the Congress it will show to you what really is Pandit Nekiram.

I am ready to accept his challenge so far as Lala Shamlal's election is concerned and trust that his public affront to the Congress by this Pandit will not be allowed to remain as it is, both by your Parliamentary Board and the Congress Working Committee at Patna.

Hoping to be excused for the trouble.

I am yours most obediently,
S.C. Vasudev

160. From Shriyut Ghanshyamsingh Gupta

4.12.1934

Dear Sir,

I hope you will please excuse me for referring to you certain difficulties that I feel in the preparation of my return for election expenses. I hope you are aware that I and Seth Govind Dassji stood as Congress candidates for the Assembly election from C.P. Hindi Divisions constituency against Dr. Sir Harisingh Gaur and one another (who later on withdrew from the contest). The constituency is a plural constituency and both of us have been returned defeating Dr. Gaur.

Rule 19 (1) of the Legislative Assembly Electoral Rules and Regulations, requires that a return of election expenses should be filed with respect to *each person*. Rule 19 (2) lays down that not only payments made by or on behalf of a candidate but also those made *in his*

interests have to be entered in the return. The words "payments made" mean I think "expenses incurred". The return has to be made on oath or affirmation.

Now my difficulty is this. Seth Govind Dassji and I being both Congress candidates, *the whole election propaganda etc. was done for both of us in all the places*. The constituency consists of two Revenue Divisions and ten Districts. Leaving aside my travelling expenses I have mainly spent in the five districts of Chhatisgarh Division. My colleague, Seth Govind Dassji, confined his efforts to the five districts of Jabalpur Division. Over and above this in some of the ten districts, several Congress friends and workers must have spent something from their district funds to bring about the Congress victory.

Now the questions that have to be solved by you are:—

(1) What expenses should my return contain?

(2) Should it contain those expenses only that have been made by me? (I can fully give this)

(3) Should it contain also the expenses of Seth Govind Dassji? (In this case, there would be delay and difficulty in collecting and collaborating.)

If yes, what about the vouchers? How can I file the vouchers of Seth Govind Dassji? He would need them for his return.

(4) Should it contain also the expenses that may have been incurred by other Congress friends and workers?

(N.B. It will be almost impossible to find out all this with all necessary vouchers within the time within which the return has to be filed).

A very early reply is requested as our election was announced on 19.11.1934. It must have been published in the *Gazette of India* very soon after.

We don't get the *India Gazette* here. I shall be obliged if you could conveniently intimate me the date of Notification and the date of *India Gazette* in which our (mine and Seth Govind Dassji's) election have been published.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
G.G. Gupta

161. From Agatha Harrison

Cranbourne Court
 Albert Bridge Road, S.W. 11
 Battersea 2400.
 8.12.1934

Dear Mahatmaji, Rajendra Babu and Dr. Ansari,

I am sending a joint letter for I want to say the something to you all. I got your letters saying you had considered my last letter, and that you were having a meeting. *The Times* of yesterday and today gives the result. I wonder if I can at all convey to you in writing the situation here. C.F.A. will be with you now and he will tell you what he found. And since the Report was issued this "temper" has strengthened. There is an honest feeling here that something tangible has been offered—that in view of the difficult political situation nothing further could have been done. From India comes the news of what you are all feeling—and with the exception of a small section—no appreciation that honest effort has been put in. Now you well know that there are many friends here who have unceasingly interpreted the reasons for this—but we need help. I tried to say this to you in my last letter. You will remember that I said to you that some "appeal" to this country to understand together with practical suggestions for next steps—was needed. Of course our news is incomplete. It may be that the full text of what took place is different. At this moment we have only the news of rejection and the demand for calling a Constituent Assembly. However right in principle this attitude may be, we are dealing with a psychological situation, and a new method of approach is badly needed. Some time ago I wrote asking if it would be impossible for you to offer some of your best people for discussing next steps. You will answer that this would be refused. I have no means of judging whether this would be. But negotiation is a method understood by ordinary men and women—even if it fails in the first instance. Flat rejection—without some positive suggestions that would rally the forces of goodwill—is not going to get us much further.

I recall, Dr. Ansari, the talks you had while here. You may have felt they were not of much use. But I have reason to know they were. Just as you, Mahatmaji, realised the honesty of Sir Samuel Hoare while fundamentally disagreeing with him—so the mark that Dr. Ansari's talks had on the people he saw, left them with this same sense of respect and belief in his integrity. Besides, as I have said before,

the release of Abdul Ghaffar Khan was largely due, I believe, to the positive things that were said here by a man who knew him and trusted him. It is this "human contact" that is urgent. This whole situation has caught this country at a bad time. Had you been able to listen in, as I did last night, to the wireless news you would know how this country is involved with the gravest situation in Europe. Then, as I said above, the average person feels that under the circumstances something has been done in this Report.

What I am trying so badly to say to you is this. Can not your case be put before us in the form of an appeal for understanding? This has never been done, has it? You may say to me "how can you ask this in the face of all that has happened?" And I would answer you that nothing less will rally the force of goodwill. Meanwhile at this end everything that is possible is being done to interpret the Indian situation. Several of us are in touch with those who will take part in the debate next week, and all the information I get either—significant sentences from letters, newspaper cuttings, *etc.*—are passed on. Next Tuesday I am seeing Lord Halifax—and I am closely in touch with strategic people in Manchester. Articles are appearing in all kinds of journals striking the note of appeal for understanding for India. The Churchill propaganda may seem to you at that end the only note that is struck—but this is not the case for I follow the papers closely.

In a deadlock—when good people on both sides feel the other simply does not understand his point of view nor make allowances for it—a new method and a new voice are needed to break through. I could wish it were possible to say that voice would come from this end. But I do not see this. I do know, though, that it could come from India. Is that voice perhaps yours, Mahatmaji's or the three of you together?

You will read between the lines of this letter. I am not a politician—but I do understand something about tangled situations, and am just trying to relay to you what I feel from this end you should know. The fact that C.F.A. is with you—is the most helpful factor in the situation. Listen to him, for none has been more closely in touch with things here than he has been.

Yours very sincerely,
Agatha Harrison

162. From B. C. Roy

Calcutta
9.12.1934

My dear Ansari,

I am sending you a letter which was addressed to you regarding the future of the Congress Parliamentary Board and I believe you have got a copy of it already. I hope you will be able to deal with it when calling a meeting of the Board.

The Congress Working Committee wanted a copy of the list of names of persons elected under the Congress Parliamentary Board ticket. I hope you will be able to send one copy of it to them. I am sending them one and it would be better to have the two copies compared, one with the other.

Satyamurti¹ came yesterday and wanted to know what you have decided regarding the officials of the Congress party in the Assembly. I agree that Bhulabhai should be the leader, but there should be two deputy leaders, one Muslim and another Hindu. I would suggest for this the names of Mr. Satyamurti and either Mr. Asaf Ali or Mr. Sherwani, preferably the latter. I say this because Bhulabhai has no experience of work in parliamentary institutions and it would be necessary to have the two men with him to help him to lead.

Yours sincerely,
B.C. Roy

¹S. Satyamurti (1889-1943); advocate, Madras High Court and one of the leading Congressmen in Tamil Nadu; swarajist member of the Madras Legislative Council from 1923-30 and of the Central Assembly from 1935 till his death.

163. To Congress Members of Legislative Assembly

11.12.1934

Dear Friend,

I have already congratulated you on your success and the Congress Working Committee has also congratulated the electorate on having

expressed its confidence and faith in the Congress. The work that lies ahead of us or rather before you, in the Assembly should begin to engage our careful and close attention from now. We have to organise the Congress Party in the Assembly on sound lines. Perhaps, you know that apart from the 45 members elected on the Congress ticket there are others who have succeeded on other tickets on whose support in regard to all main questions we may easily count. But our block of 45 members must throughout the sessions of the Assembly remain solid and every member should be in continuous attendance, if we are to make our weight felt. The Congress expects everyone of its members to submit to iron discipline and work for the maintenance and strengthening of the prestige of the Congress and to devote the whole of his time to the service for which the Congress has detailed him. Perhaps I am putting it a little too strongly, but, the occasion demands that every Congress member should consider himself as if he were subject to the rules of prison, where his presence whether well or ill is a foregone conclusion. That is of utmost importance. Further, we have to frame the rules of our Party and elect the office-bearers and the Executive Committee of the Party before the actual commencement of the sessions and for this purpose, I must request you to make it convenient to attend a meeting of all the elected Congress members on 17th January at 4.30 P.M. at my residence in Delhi. The session of the Assembly commence on the 21st January, and therefore I want all the Congress members to get through all the preliminary work including the framing of the rules of the Party, election of office-bearers *etc.* and also the selection of names for the various Standing Committees of the Assembly, as well as the details of the work to be undertaken by the Party in the Assembly, to be completed before the commencement of the sessions. You will, therefore, realise that the meeting I have called is absolutely essential. We shall try to complete our plans during the four days that you will be in Delhi before the commencement of the sessions and then you are expected to be present throughout the sessions.

If there is anything you would like to be done in connection with your stay in Delhi during the sessions, you may communicate with Mr. Asaf Ali.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

164. From S. Satyamurti

Madras
12.12.1934

My dear Ansari,

Your kind letter of the 29th November. Kindly excuse the delay in replying to the same. I returned from Patna only the day before yesterday, hence the delay.

I shall answer your first question in my next letter. As regards the second question, I give the following figures:

Mr. S. Satyamurti	8,758
„ A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar	3,351
„ C.N. Muthuranga Mudaliar	10,137
„ P. Natesa Mudaliar	3,704
Dr. T.S.S. Rajan	13,097
Mr. Raja Bahadur G. Krishnamachariar	3,035
„ T.R. Venugopal Chettiar	545
„ P.S. Kumaraswami Raja	12,931
„ Kanthimathanatha Pillai	140
„ T.S. Avanasalingam Chettiar	15,258
Dr. P. Varadarajulu Naidu	2,047
Mr. Swami Venkatachellam Chettiar	757
Sir R.K. Shunmugam Chettiar	665
Mr. Samuel Aren	10,801
Mr. Prabakara Thamban	1,790
Dr. K. Nageswara Rao Pantulu	32,772
Mr. Vemuri Subramaniam	1,434
„ N.G. Ranga	12,816
„ Ramiah Chowdary	3,625
„ T.M. Anantasayanam Iyengar	12,565
„ T.N. Ramakrishna Chettiar	3,873
„ V.V. Giri	18,921
„ Seetarama Raju	8,319
Total Votes for Congress Candidates	1,48,813

I shall get the votes cast in the Muslim and in the special constituencies and send them later.

In answer to your third question, I desire to state that the only party which fought us in this Province was the Justice Party which is a pro-Government, anti-Congress and a communal organisation. They generally attacked the Congress but did not dare either to accept the White Paper, or to support the repressive laws during the election

time; they, however, fought our proposal for a Constituent Assembly. The non-Congressmen's electioneering methods, in this province, were to rouse communal prejudice against the Brahmin candidates who stood, and to try and to corrupt parts of the Electorate; these methods proved failures. In only the Commerce constituency, was official pressure, brought to bear against the Congress. There were no serious irregularities observed in the actual working of the electoral machinery. As a matter of fact, a very large number of voters, including ladies went to the polls in the Province. No Congress candidate was defeated.

There was no communal tension in any constituency. In the rural areas, the relations between the electorates and the candidates were of the best; but the particular question which exercised the minds of the electorate was the heavy taxation in the country, and especially Land Revenue in the Province.

In my opinion, the best method of nursing the constituencies for both the Assembly and the Councils is (1) to carry on a relentless fight against the bureaucracy on every issue, major and minor, in the Assembly (2) the Congress members of the Assembly to carry on continual propaganda in their constituencies, explain their work in the Assembly, the defects of the Joint Parliamentary Report, and the supreme and urgent need for a Constituent Assembly being summoned. I entirely agree with you that it is extremely essential that we should pursue our gains with determination and method and lay the foundation for complete success throughout the country in the future. You may count on my humble services in that direction.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Satyamurti

165. From K. F. Nariman

Bombay
12.12.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Since sending my last typed statement, the position is now made more clear. In view of this altered situation, I would earnestly urge the consideration of the course suggested in my statement; apart from the

Government attitude, under the present circumstances, that seems to be the most feasible course. All the members, from different parts will be able to express their opinion, and most of them that are prevented for want of funds and travelling and other expenses, will also be able to exercise their right. Referendum is a recognised mode of democratic voting and if the particular form suggested by me is not acceptable, some other form, based on the same principle may be considered. Most of the Provincial members have already been written to by me informally and thus the grounds are already prepared. Some of the Provinces have already acted on it and met and discussed the situation, informally, and come to a definite conclusion by regular votes. The same procedure, little more systematically and formally adopted, with the sanction of the leaders, will certainly bring about satisfactory results. As suggested in my previous statement, Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Jawaharlal and others may issue statements giving full expression to their views, and general propaganda, to give vent to all points of view, may also be permitted so that all parties may have equal deal and none could have any cause to complain.

I believe Mahatma Gandhi had suggested a larger referendum on the question of Temple-Entry, that process was much more complicated and difficult, because sections of voters on both sides were not properly defined. Whereas in the particular case, we can more definitely fix the different groups in provinces and districts; in addition to A.I.C.C. members, other well-defined groups, such as members and office-bearers of original Provincial, District, and Taluka Committees may be included and thus the circle may be widened and made more representative; some such method will have to be considered, otherwise under the existing conditions, which are likely to last long, the country and the Congress will have no chance to express a considered opinion and give a definite verdict on a most important and vital national issue, that is obviously agitating the minds of all Congressmen and the country in general. I think the leaders must give a chance at least once to the country to give a verdict on this vital issue; that will also clarify the position and certainly improve the situation. The present liquid state is very detrimental and an effort must be made to end it.

I hope, therefore, the matter will be considered dispassionately and some satisfactory solution found. A little delay under the special circumstances and new difficulties, would not matter; besides, this process will also be the means of bringing provincial workers together and thus lead at least to provincial and district consolidation.

I, therefore, earnestly urge this point of view for favourable

consideration and will anxiously await your reply.

As a result of my communication with various friends and colleagues in the provinces and districts, I find that there is generally a keen desire on the part of the Congressmen all over to try to obtain a considered verdict on this issue, formally or informally, and I hope the leaders will take some steps to have that legitimate desire fulfilled.

I shall request you to place the above point of view, along with the other typed statement, before all the members.

As suggested at Jubbulpore I intended to send a definite Resolution and was awaiting replies from certain provinces but I am doubtful now, in view of the changed situation, whether, members who desired a meeting for a change in the programme, still hold the same view; in fairness to them I shall have to make a fresh reference which means further delay, but I feel certain that most of them will prefer the other course of referendum suggested above. I will await your guidance before taking the next step.

With *Pranams* to Gandhiji and other colleagues,

Yours sincerely,
K.F. Nariman

166. From P. Banerjea

Calcutta
14.12.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

About three weeks ago I wrote a letter to Mr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Congress, urging the desirability of issuing a Manifesto over the signatures of a majority of the elected members rejecting the Joint Select Committee's Report. I sent also a telegram to him during the sittings of the Working Committee and the Parliamentary Board at Patna. Unfortunately, no steps seem to have been taken in this direction. I learn from newspaper reports that the Parliamentary Board expects to secure 75 votes in favour of rejection of the Report in the Assembly. But the expectation may or may not be realised. In

case some of other groups refuse to join us we shall be defeated in the Assembly over this question. In my opinion, therefore, it will be desirable to take the first step immediately by issuing a Manifesto over the signatures of a majority of the elected members and then after the commencement of the Assembly session negotiate with the other groups for support to the rejection in the Assembly itself. I shall feel obliged if you kindly take necessary steps in the matter.

Trusting you are keeping good health,

I am,
Yours sincerely,
P. Banerjea

167. From T.S.S. Rajan¹

Trichinopoly
15.12.1934

Dear Doctor,

I did receive your congratulatory telegram on my success and I do hope you have received my humble acknowledgement in reply. I perfectly agree with you in your suggestion that we should discharge the trust that is placed in us by the electorate, to the best of our capacity.

I do expect that our comrades in the Assembly will be able to pull together as one man and do what we can to make ourselves felt. I shall attend the meeting at your place on the 17th January 1935 at 4.30 P.M.

I am a perfect stranger to Delhi. I have never set my foot even once in the Imperial capital. Mr. Asaf Ali knows me well while I was with him in London and I do trust he would not have forgotten my association with him. I have received communication from the Secretary to

¹1880-1953; studied medicine at Madras and Trichinopoly, and Middlesex Hospital, London; TNCC Secretary, 1921-22, 1923-24, 1930-32; general secretary, Indian National Congress, 1922; MLA Central (Congress), Tanjore-Trichinopoly, 1934-36; nominated MLC, 1937; minister for Health and Religious Endowments, 1937-9, 1946-51.

the Assembly asking me details regarding my requirements with regard to residence *etc.* I shall be writing to him in the course of a day or two. Very probably I shall be coming with my people and also my car.

Regarding the J.P.C. Report, I have already submitted a criticism in the *Hindu* and I am drawing the attention of the intelligentsia of this part of the country to the decisions of the Congress Parliamentary Board on the question. I shall stay at Delhi throughout the sessions and try to shoulder whatever responsibility the party may demand of me. If there is anything further that you wish to communicate with me you may do so.

Yours sincerely,
T.S.S. Rajan

168. From Beni Prasad Singh¹

Lucknow
15.12.34

Dear Sir,

Before I come to the subject of writing this to you, I thought an insignificant soldier in the fight, consider it my duty to venture to offer you my congratulations upon the immemorable lead given by you, on the 5th of April last, to the Congress as well as the country in the revival of the Swaraj Party as it was then termed, and that at a time when the then chaotic intense and distressing darkness had altogether baffled the vision of the rank and file.

2. The virtue of your lead lay also in the fact that it was but providential that Mahatma Gandhi had also come to the decision of the suspension of the civil disobedience movement on or about 2nd of the same month.

¹He had served as Secretary of the Lucknow Congress Committee, member of the PCC and of the AICC.

3. The virtue of your lead is further evinced by the brilliant success the Congress has attained at the Assembly Elections throughout the country with the delightful result that the Congress is once again a living force and the most powerful organisation. Its inactivity was mistaken for its lifelessness by the unbelievers. Not only every living Indian but the posterity to come shall be grateful to you for your so courageous, definite and wise lead.

4. It is an admitted truth that it is only through non-violent non-cooperation that India can achieve Swaraj. India has so far failed to gain its end because this non-cooperation with the present system of government had not the full and active cooperation from all quarters as expected. Particularly those in service could not but be passive in their patriotism if at all. Fear of losing their livelihood as well distrust of us, created in them by the opposite party got the better of their love for freedom. They are no doubt alive to the fruits of freedom and ordinarily they think interestedly and feelingly of the Congress and its work.

5. They could be brought closer still and their distrust and fear of us dispelled, if the Congress proved itself their true friend in their smaller difficulties and local needs practically. They will then begin to love the Congress and respect it all the more. And it is love only which inspires sacrifice whether small or great.

6. At the same time the Congress is a representative of those in service also.

7. Even humanity and brotherhood demand that the Congress fought the cause of those in service in and out of councils. It is a fact that some individuals of one or more departments have often gone far too beyond in their operations against the Congress movement, but their high-handedness, forced and circumstantial as it was, is negligible and pardonable and it cannot be considered a reason why the Congress should not do its duty by them if needed.

8. It is a fact that those in power have always endeavoured that the service had antagonistic feelings against the Congress. The safeguards provided for, and unnecessary public assurance given to the service on the eve of the contemplated transfer of but illusory powers, are again indicative of the policy of keeping and retaining the service and institutions connected with it as an inimical and warring block against the representatives of the populace as if transfer of power to people meant devastation to service. This ought to be our very serious concern.

9. I also think that the Congress Parliamentary Board shall have a

longer and more useful lease of life, and work the programme put before it by the Congress for a longer period of time than it may seemingly appear at present.

10. I, therefore, submit that it was high time that the Congress Parliamentary Board included in its programme "THE WORK OF OBTAINING REDRESS IN AND OUT OF COUNCILS OF ANY WRONG DONE TO ANY INDIVIDUAL OR INDIVIDUALS OF ANY DEPARTMENT, OR PUBLIC BODY."

11. Further it is also a fact that some individuals of certain departments go generally far too beyond in the execution of their duties and some times tyrannize and oppress people. I, therefore, submit that the Congress Parliamentary Board included in its programme also "THE WORK OF OBTAINING REDRESS OF ANY WRONG DONE BY ONE INDIVIDUAL OR MORE OF ANY DEPARTMENT OR PUBLIC BODY."

12. To sum up therefore, the Congress Parliamentary Board should include in its activities "THE REDRESS OF ANY WRONG DONE (A) "TO" AND (B) "BY" ONE INDIVIDUAL OR MORE OF ANY DEPARTMENT, PUBLIC BODY OR CONCERN."

13. In order to obtain a smooth and thorough working of this item of work, District, Provincial and All-India Boards be appointed and they be named as District, Provincial and All-India Scrutiny Boards.

14. In a district three or more Scrutiny Boards be appointed to cover the several departments that is :—

- (1) Administration including Law, Revenue, Police and Taxes.
- (2) Trade and Agriculture. Also Mills, Banks and other concerns.
- (3) Railway, Telegraph and Post.
- (4) Education, Medical and Sanitary.
- (5) Jail, Forest and Excise.
- (6) The Local Self-Government.
- (7) The Publicity Board including matters connected with Newspapers and Press.

15. (a) In cases where the District Scrutiny Boards fail to get a wrong redressed at the hands of district authorities, they refer it to Provincial and the latter in its turn to the All-India Scrutiny Board for further action in or out of Councils as the case may warrant.

(b) It will at the same time be open to the District Scrutiny Boards to investigate into, scrutinize, and report to their Provincial Boards, on the working and other aspects of the different departments and organisations mentioned in the foregoing paragraph.

16. The All-India Scrutiny Board will expand the scheme, make laws, guide the whole work and remain responsible to the All-India Congress Parliamentary Board.

17. It is needless on my part to assure you of the far-reaching characteristic of the scheme. All the world over and even so in India it is a war of thoughts in each and every sphere of life. And in the Thought War this scheme of work, apparently simple and perhaps not very alluring at a glance, shall prove a dynamite in its effects. On the one hand it will give us a true insight into and a sort of control over the working of all departments and train us to shoulder responsibility when it comes and on the other it will afford protection to the public as well as those in service and knit all closer to you and the Congress.

I request your favour in kindly giving this your kind and serious consideration and ordering it to be placed before the next meeting of your Board.

Yours faithfully,
Beni Prasad Singh

169. From C. Rajagopalachari

Madras
18.12.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

The local Congress Committee including all important Congressmen unanimously recommend the adoption of Mr. P. Ratnavelu Tevar for the Trichy-Srirangam bye-election. Mr. Satyamurti and myself both recommend this for your formal sanction. Mr. Bhulabhai Desai has already wired his approval. Please send me your formal approval also by wire.

Yours sincerely,
C. Rajagopalachari

170. From M. S. Aney¹Yeotmal (Berar)
20.12.1934

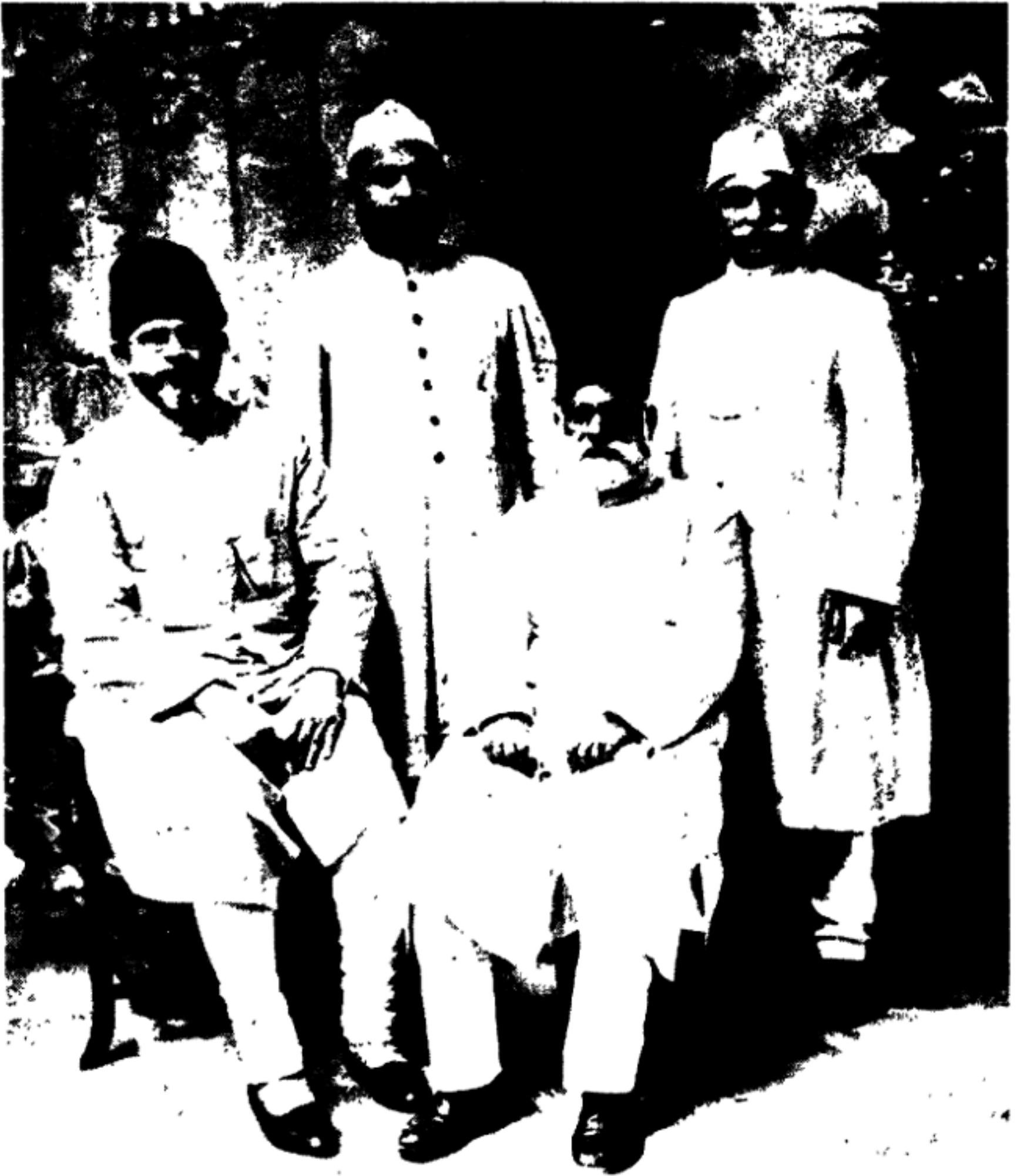
Dear Doctor Ansari,

Your kind letter dated 10th December was duly received by me. As I had been out of Yeotmal for two days I was unable to acknowledge the same earlier.

I am also equally anxious to meet and discuss the points on which there is agreement between us with a view to chalk out a line of action common to all sometime before the session begins. Owing to the unfortunate illness of Rev. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, it has not yet been possible for the members of the Congress Nationalist Party to meet together and decide on any course of action for its members to follow in legislature on the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report and the Communal Award. I think that the party meeting will be held in X'mas vacation. If you are at Delhi during this period, I intend to come and see you after the meeting. I'll of course intimate to you the precise date of my arrival from Benares by a separate letter or telegram later.

The attitude of the Government is extremely provocative. The prosecution and awarding of severe sentences on Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Dr. Satyapal for sedition, and the serving of an order on Babu Subhash Bose to quit the country within seven days, irrespective of all considerations of decency, propriety, justice or humanity, are things which make one's own blood boil with indignation. It is very necessary that you should particularly use your influence with the Congress Parliamentary Board to bring about a common understanding between the Congress members and others on all matters of urgent political national importance. I hope that you will succeed in finding a formula that shall duly take into account the feelings of Bengal and Punjab on the communal solution. Where there is a will,

¹1880-1968; vice-president, Indian Home Rule League; president, Berar, PCC, 1921-30, and MLA from Berar, 1924-27, 1927-30, and 1935; member, Congress Working Committee, 1924-25; and 1931-34; member, Nehru Committee, 1928; general secretary, Congress Nationalist Assembly Party, 1935; general secretary Anti-Communal Award Conference Working Committee, 1935; member, Viceroy's Council, 1942; governor of Bihar, 1948-52; member, Lok Sabha, 1952-67.



Standing left to right: Zakir Husain, M. A Ansari
Sitting left to right: Abdul Majid Khwaja, Abdul Haq

there is a way. I think that I should now conclude so that I must have some points for discussion with you when I propose to meet you next. Kindly convey my best compliments to Mr. Asaf Ali.

With kind regards,

I am yours truly,
M. S. Aney

171. To P. Banerjea

Delhi
22.12.1934

Dear Dr. Banerjea,

I am in receipt of your letter of 14th December. I saw your letter to Babu Rajendra Prasad and I think it was placed before the Working Committee also. If I remember alright, the Working Committee has expressed its considered opinion about the subject you mention in your letter. As, in matters of policy the Congress Parliamentary Board is guided by the Working Committee, the Congress Parliamentary Board must accept the decision of the Working Committee.

I hope you are quite well and happy.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

P.S. A house in New Delhi which may have sufficient accommodation for four or five members may be rented from Rs 200 to Rs 300 a month and an equally big house in Old Delhi may be rented from Rs 150 to Rs. 200. But, it will be possible to get cheaper houses also with less accommodation. I would like you to come to a financial decision as regards living in government quarters or in a private house and let me know.

172. From C.F. Andrews¹

Santiniketan
23.12.1934

My dear Ansari,

I have been so occupied every moment during this visit with trying to avoid another crisis between Bapu and the Government about visiting the Frontier, that I have been able to think of nothing else in the world but that. To my horror I found that I had even been to Delhi for three days on this business and had not found out whether you were there or not though I wanted so much to see you. But I know you will forgive me because it was only by concentration of every thought and prayer on this one thing that the crisis itself could be averted. I had to see the Viceroy and the Home Member in Calcutta as well as seeing others in Delhi. Although I am somewhat hopeful, though things are not out of the wood yet. I go back to England by the next mail and I hope to see Bapu once more before I go, and, if possible, get him to concentrate his attention on this great new work of village reconstruction. I know you will help in this matter when he comes to Delhi.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan himself and his brother have no wish whatever that Bapu should force the issue of the Frontier at this moment. I have been tired out with these constant journeys and I am sure you will forgive me for dictating this letter instead of writing it myself.

With much love,

Charlie Andrews

¹Rev. Charles Freer Andrews (1871-1940); educated at King Edward VI School Birmingham, Pembroke College, Cambridge; head of Pembroke College Mission, 1896; vice-principal of Westcott House, Cambridge, 1900; joined Cambridge Brotherhood Delhi 1904; joined Rabindranath Tagore's institution at Santiniketan 1915; went to Fiji concerning abolition of Indentured Indian Labour, 1915-1917; Correspondent of *Manchester Guardian*, *Natal Adviser*, *Toronto Star*, *Modern Review*, Calcutta, *The Hindu*, Madras. Publications: *Zakullah of Delhi*; *India and the Simon Report*, 1930, *Mahatma Gandhi at Work*; *India and Bhutan a moral challenge*, 1936; (with Dr Mookerjee) *The Rise and Growth of the Congress in India*, 1939.

173. From Rajendra Prasad

P.O. Zeradai
Distt. Saran
26.12.1934

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I have been thinking about the Council programme and desire to give my views for the consideration of the Parliamentary Board and the members of the Assembly.

I am one of those who believe that a party engaged in a mass revolutionary movement should not accept positions of honour, responsibility and profit until it has succeeded in capturing power. The reasons are that such acceptance creates personal jealousies among the members, raises hopes among the masses which the party is not able to fulfil and thus a reaction against it sets in. This has been the experience of workers in other countries which has been confirmed by the very limited experience we have gained in this country in the course of our struggle when we have captured Municipal and District Boards and also partly when we have simply entered legislatures. In spite of this conviction out of deference to friends and workers we have not only acquiesced in but have given a whole-hearted and full-throated support to the Council programme and the following suggestions are intended to meet as far as possible the basic objection. I assume that the Parliamentary programme is going to be a more or less permanent feature of the Congress programme and may even have to be extended in scope and extent.

We have just emerged successfully out of an election campaign. If we analyse the causes which have helped in achieving this success, I think it will be conceded that it is not so much due to our clear-cut programme or to the eloquence with which it has been placed before the voters or to the strength of our wide-spread organisation or to the personal merits of the candidates—although I do not deny that these too, have had their influence at particular places or in case of particular individuals—but to the faith and confidence among the people at large in the Congress created by the sacrifices and service of hundreds of thousands of men and women, young and old, all over the country. We cannot afford to neglect or to treat with indifference thousands of workers who during the civil disobedience movement suffered and ruined themselves

physically and economically but came forward to organise the election campaign when the call came from the Congress. I believe that the best course to avoid jealousies is to harmonise by equalisation, as far as possible, the position of the legislators with that of the ordinary workers. It is not suggested that an absolute equality is possible—but it should be made clear that positions in the Assembly and the Councils are sought for service and sacrifice and people going there are as much under discipline as the humblest worker in the Congress ranks. Service, sacrifice and discipline are and ought to be our watchwords whether we are engaged in sweeping and cleaning a Harijan village or are seated on a ministerial *gaddi* exercising what may appear to be extensive powers. In other words our legislators ought to volunteers. From this it follows that the Parliamentary Board, or if necessary the Working Committee, should undertake to support and maintain them, if necessary, during the period of legislative sessions and at other times when they are engaged in active work. In doing so, it will of course have regard to the position that has to be maintained by a person of that status consistently with the Congress ideal, and efficiency will in all cases have to be guarded. The members themselves will have no claim to any allowance and emoluments which they may get and all such income will come to the Board. Any member used to a higher standard of living than that provided by the Board will have freedom to supplement the provision made for them along with other members at their own cost or to have their own independent arrangements, if they so desire, at their own cost. It will have the effect of creating an *esprit de corps* among the members themselves and establish a kind of kinship with the humble workers which will be helpful in our work. For the Assembly we have had to contest only about 50 seats or so. We may soon have to contest ten or fifteen times as many more. I visualise to myself and ask the Board and the members of the Assembly to visualise the future after the new constitution is introduced in spite of our refusal and rejection. All kinds of personal, caste, and communal jealousies will arise and the only way to deaden the sharp edges of that jealousy is to bring the legislature to the level of the ordinary worker so that the country at large and the workers may feel and see that after all it is only a division of labour that has been effected, some having been detailed to village work and others to legislative work according to the exigencies of the situation and that the places are interchangeable. There is a notion current among some people—perhaps created by our opponents, but seems to be further strengthened by malicious propaganda against us in the future, that membership of

District Boards and much more so of legislatures is not only a position of honour but also of pecuniary profit. I apprehend that for local councils we may have to face not only the false propaganda of our opponents but a certain amount of envious mistrust amongst some genuine, but many more spurious Congressmen also. I am, therefore, anxious that the Legislative Assembly which has our picked men and where we have only some fifty members or so should set the pace and the example for Provincial Councillors to follow when the time comes. The Working Committee has passed a resolution asking Congress members to wear *Khadi* and thus establish a link between them and the villages. I trust the Board will further strengthen this link by taking away the apparent pecuniary advantage from them. Such a step is not without precedent in India. We know that the members of the Servants of India Society make no pecuniary profit from any position they may hold. Their allowances and salaries attaching to any post they may hold go to the society which makes suitable arrangements for them. Possibly we have a lower standard of living having to deal not only with a few individuals of high attainments but with thousand upon thousand of all classes and calibres; but whatever standard the Board fixes, it will be responsible for making the necessary arrangements to conform to that standard, and the principle should be recognised that the allowances and emoluments belong to the Board and not to the individual member. Amongst individuals who have set apart their earning in office we have the example of the late President Vallabh-bhai Patel and Ganesh Dutt Singh. If there is any saving we shall have a nucleus for a party fund as a by-product. I think some such thing is necessary if we have to prevent rot from setting in and keep at a high level the enthusiasm of our workers and the masses. An announcement to this effect after the first meeting of the members on the 17th January will go a great way towards maintaining the high pitch attained during the last elections.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Rajendra Prasad

174. From C.R. Reddy¹

Chittoor
29.12.1934

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Umar Ali Shah, M.L.A., a very particular friend of mine, has been here as my guest and had a frank talk with me regarding his position *vis-a-vis* the Congress. I told him to communicate freely with you, and place himself entirely under your guidance. Briefly the matter is this. He has been a Congressman, staunch and sincere, since 1920 and had made immense sacrifices. But lately he was forced to feel that for no reason he had been treated very badly by the Congress leaders of Andhra; and he has become completely estranged. On questions of principle also he is not such an unreserved Congressite as before. He dislikes Jinnah and his vanities and gallery politics; he simply terribly loathes and detests Shaukat Ali; and is no admirer of Sir Abdur Rahim. He feels isolated and miserable.

He told me you had written to him to join the Congress organisation (I hate to call it a party which in essence it is not); but that he had not replied as he could not make up his mind what exactly he should do.

Personally he is a man of fine impulses and fiery patriotism. He has a big place in Telegu Literature, being one of our best poets. He is so well up in Sanskrit, that he could speak extempore in that language. I dragged him to the Vellore Conference on 27th instant and asked him to address the gathering in Telugu. Well, he started in Sanskrit. Hindu-Muslim unity is part of his very nature.

I wonder if you could possibly put him up. He is a nice chap; but just now very bitter against Nageswara Rao, and most bitter against Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya² and Co.

I thought it best to keep you posted in this affair, in the assurance that you would be able to handle him and the situation successfully.

We all want the Congress to contest the presidentship of the Assembly, even if there be no certainty of winning, with Sherwani as

¹b. 1880; deputy-leader and organiser of the United Nationalist Party, 1924; vice-chancellor, Andhra University, 1928-30; elected to the Madras Legislative Council in 1935.

²1880-1959; author of the official history of the Indian National Congress.

candidate. It would have a bad effect if you made a present of it to Abdur Rahim or any other non-Congressite.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,
C.R. Reddy

175. To M. A. Jinnah¹

Delhi
30.12.1934

My dear Jinnah,

I must begin by welcoming you home and hope that you are fully restored to health. Now that you have been returned to the Assembly again at a very critical juncture in the history of constitutional changes, your usual patriotic outlook and political foresight would prove a great asset to the opposition. With the divergent elements with which you will have to deal, you will have a strenuous time until the summer recess. It is more than obvious that a very great deal would depend on the attitude the Muslim members may adopt at this time, and it is equally clear that yours will be the greatest share in shaping their outlook and views. On more than one occasion you have made your own point of view perfectly clear. We all remember that you characterised the White Paper Scheme as "treacherous" and now comes the J.P.C. Report which is in most respects much worse than the White Paper Scheme. Your recent interview since your return as published in the Press laying stress on unity of purpose has paved the way for a definite move in the right direction. Keeping that in view I am anxious for an interchange of views and I particularly want to know what in your view can be the basis of co-opera-

¹During 1934 Jinnah spent a lot of time travelling. In April 1934 he returned to India after a stay of over three years in England. He went back to England a month later only to sail for India in January 1935 after his election as an Independent member of the Central Legislature from Bombay. Jinnah attended the first session of new Assembly, but, in April, he returned to his West Heath House in London, where he remained until October.

tion between the majority of the elected members of the Assembly. It is not quite certain yet, but it is fully expected, that the Government propose to allot sometime almost in the beginning of the session to initiate a debate on the proposed 'reforms'. So far as I can see, if this debate is at all initiated by the government, it will take the form of a resolution recommending the acceptance or approval of the reforms. It is, therefore, essential that the majority of the members should come to some agreement regarding the course of action they should adopt and if the government does not propose any resolution of that nature, there ought to be an agreement regarding the phrasing of the resolution which the majority of the members should support. I am, therefore, anxious to know how you would like to phrase such a resolution.

I have called a meeting of the Congress Parliamentary Board and the elected Congress members of the Assembly on the 17th of January at Delhi. The Working Committee of the Congress is also meeting on the 16th. But, some agreement ought to be reached before the 15th, at least among the various groups and, therefore, you will agree with me that it would be desirable if three or four members of the Congress Party and some of the leading members of the Assembly met together sometime before the 15th, which seems to be the last date for any notice of the resolution which might come up on the 5th of February, the first non-official day. There are other questions also which would require previous consultation, such for instance as, the election of the President. I wonder if it would be possible for you to come to Delhi for consultation along these lines.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

176. From Mohammad Iqbal

Lahore
1.1.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Thank you very much for your letter. I am so glad to hear that the great Turkish lady¹ has at last come to India to tell us of the great

¹Halide Edib (1884-1964), distinguished Turkish writer, and author of *The Turkish Ordeal*, *Turkey Faces West*, *Inside India* and *Conflict of East and West in Turkey*.

conflict which is still going on and will probably continue for a good long time to come. I should have been immensely happy to preside over her lecture; but I suppose you do not know that I have been ill during the whole of the last year and under the treatment first of doctors and later of your brother. I have got a bad throat trouble which makes me incapable of any kind of speech. I can talk only in low tones of voice. Hakim Saheb assures me that I shall be all right and a visible improvement in my voice will come in the month of February. I shall wait till then and if matters do not improve I shall think of going to Vienna in which connection I shall have to seek your help and advice. For the present, unfortunately, I am quite unable to meet your wishes. I do hope you will excuse me.

I received a letter from Mr. Jinnah this morning. I think the time has come for Hindus and Muslims to work together. I have no doubt that you will do your best to bring about a national pact which will form a basis for future co-operation. If this opportunity is lost present tensions will only stiffen more and more making co-operation impossible.

Yours sincerely,
Mohammad Iqbal

177. From S.A. Brelvi

Bombay
2.1.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I have received your letter regarding Madame Halide Edib. We shall make all arrangements for her reception in Bombay and I shall see that she is comfortably placed here and also arrange for her departure to Delhi. I shall send a wire to you as desired by you. We shall not detain her for a long time, but when she returns to Bombay I hope you will kindly arrange with her that she stays here for two or three days and gives some lectures. I have already written to the Vice-Chancellor of the Bombay University to arrange, if possible, for series of lectures by her. As soon as I hear from him, I shall let you know. Though I am sorry you could not come to Bombay, I am afraid, during the *Ramazan* it would not have been possible for you to collect money for the Jamia Millia.

His Highness the Sheriff of Morocco, whose father was the Ruler of North Morocco and the Riff, arrived in Bombay about four or five days ago in the same boat as Mr. Jinnah. He is the brother-in-law of Amir Abdul Karim who valiantly fought for the freedom of Riff against the Spanish and who has now, for several years, been a prisoner of the French Government. H.H. the Sheriff of Morocco has come to India to secure the support of the Muslims in this country to a representation to the French Government through the British Government for the release of Amir Abdul Karim. He is anxious to come in contact with the leading Muslims in India. He has proceeded to Hyderabad for a fortnight's stay there. I have suggested to him that he should go to Bhopal and get in touch with the Nawab Saheb of Bhopal. As you were coming to Bombay, I had suggested to him to stay here and meet you. But he left for Hyderabad as you changed your programme. I hope you will kindly write to Shuaib to arrange for his reception in Bhopal and also for an interview with the Nawab Saheb. I hope you will also write to Nawab Saheb direct about H.H. Sheriff of Morocco and his mission. I shall let you know when he leaves Hyderabad as he has promised to write to me from there now and then. From Bhopal he will go to Delhi. I hope you will kindly receive him there and do all you can to help him in his mission.

I had expected when you arrived in Bombay you would have some conversation with Mr. Jinnah. However, this conversation now is to be postponed till the middle of the next month when Mr. Jinnah goes to Delhi. I have had some talks with him and, so far as I can gather from the conversation, he is prepared to go to any length to agree to an acceptable compromise on the question of the Communal Award. Though he has not committed himself to any proposal, he may personally agree to a suggestion made by Khaliquzzaman that the Muslims should agree to the modifications of the Communal Award on the basis of the Joint Electorate without any change in the number of seats allocated to them under the Communal Award. I personally think this would be a good compromise provided the Muslims and the Hindus agree to it. I shall have a talk with Mr. Jinnah again when Mr. Bhulabhai Desai returns here and write to you about the result of the discussion.

With love,

Yours affectionately,
S.A. Brelvi

178. From M.A. Jinnah

Bombay
3.1.1935

My dear Ansari,

Thank you so much for your very kind and encouraging letter. I appreciate it all the more as it comes from a sincere and old friend. I shall be glad to meet the Congress leaders and the Congress Party members of the Assembly and will try my best to run up to Delhi as requested by you for the purpose stated in your letter, but I have heard that you are coming to Bombay. If that is so please let me know and we can have a talk during your stay in Bombay. More when we meet.

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Jinnah

179. From Mohammad Iqbal

Lahore
9.1.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari,

Thank you so much for your kind letter. Hakim Saheb's treatment has very much improved my general health; but the condition of my voice is practically the same. He tells me that there will be a visible difference in the voice in the month of February. I have great confidence in him, as his personality inspires great affection and especially to me he is as affectionate and kind as you are.

I do hope you will succeed in persuading the Congress to adopt a more affirmative attitude towards the political problem which has proved so troublesome to the country. If the present state of things is allowed to continue there will be no hope for the country. The Report is likely to release or even to create forces which will

perpetuate the present state of things. For any reasonable national pact you can fully count on my support.

Hoping you are well.

Yours sincerely,
Mohammad Iqbal

180. From M.A. Jinnah

TELEGRAM

9.1.1935

RECD NO REPLY MY LETTER ARE YOU COMING BOMBAY
DO YOU STILL DESIRE MY MEETING CONGRESS LEADERS
WIRE DATE MEETING

JINNAH

181. From Sri Prakasa

Benares Cantt.
10.1.1935

My dear Doctor Saheb,

Father and I will be reaching Delhi early in the morning of the 17th to be in time for your meeting the same afternoon. You are good enough to offer to send your remaining contribution of Rs. 3,500 to the Provincial Election Fund, by Jan. 15. If I receive the sum before I leave, I shall be able to put the money in the bank on part settlement of the amount still due from me to them. We shall even then be short by Rs. 5,000 which Dr. Bidhan Roy had promised but which he later declined to pay. I may only hope that provincial members of the Assembly will try to save from their allowances and contribute to make up this sum and not leave us in the lurch, otherwise I shall be

badly hit. In fact, as I explained to you in my earlier letters, I shall not know how to pay it up unless friends come to my rescue.

Among other things we have to decide at Delhi our social problems also :

(1) What shall be our attitude towards the King's Jubilee ? I have been asked that question by local officials and have told them I shall reply after I have consulted you and others.

(2) What reply shall we send to invitations to parties to meet the Viceroy ? I have already received an invitation to that effect from Delhi and am not yet replying to it.

These social problems are as baffling and difficult as the political ones.

With respects and every hope that you are quite well by now,

Yours sincerely,
Sri Prakasa

182. From C.F. Andrews

London
10.1.1935

My dear Ansari,

I have written a very important letter to Bapu and asked him to show it to you. I saw an article of yours which you gave to the *Hindu* and it was reprinted in the *Free Press Journal*. It seems to me quite admirable. I am hoping to make use of it. Everything depends just now on making a great effort for goodwill in the next six months which will do more at the present time in England than anything else to win us what we want. There is a very great and true loyalty towards the King and Queen in England for their goodness and very great desire to make memorable this year which is their Jubilee year. As true satyagrahis we ought surely to use this goodwill and not despise it and I believe this can be done. But the first thing is to remove suspicion which hangs about in unexpected quarters and we must do nothing to excite it again while we are trying to remove it where it is most unjustly held.

I am putting down only a few random thoughts but my letter to Bapu was written after long and serious thinking. I still regret more than I can say that I failed to see you in Delhi when I was actually there .

Yours affectionately,
Charlie Andrews

183. From B.C. Roy

Calcutta
10.1.1935

My dear Ansari,

I am sorry to have missed you when you came to Calcutta on Christmas Day. I had to go to see a case in Mymensingh and I had no intimation that you are coming until the day before you reached Calcutta. I asked my friends in Calcutta as well as my brother to go to station and I hope that you were not inconvenienced.

I have now made up my mind about Congress matters and as you know I have given a great deal of thought to the matters and I have come to the conclusion that it is best that I should be out of it all.

I am surely coming to Delhi, but I may not reach there before the evening of the 17th as I have an important meeting of the Belgatchia Hospital on the 16th evening.

My best wishes to you all.

I have spoken to Nalini about your letter and about the Bank. He told me that he would do his best to meet with your wishes.

Yours sincerely,
B.C. Roy

184. From Sri Prakasa

10.1.1935

The Secretary
Legislative Department
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

I am sending herewith a list of the Members of the Legislative Assembly who belong to the Congress Party. I shall communicate to you other names before the commencement of the session. We shall require a bloc for our Party and I take it since ours is the largest Party in the Assembly, we shall form the official opposition. I may draw your attention to the fact that in 1927 when the numbers of the Swarajya Party as the official Opposition was less than the number of the Congress Party today I understand they were allotted six seats on the front benches, and therefore, it is hoped that we shall be allotted not less than seven seats on the front benches now.

The Congress Party is meeting here before the session, when the Leader of the Party will definitely allot seats to the members of the Party in our bloc. I shall communicate to you the detailed list of this allotment later on.

I must also state that we shall require a big enough room for our Party meetings and I hope it will be possible for us to secure for this purpose the room on the left of the main entrance in the Council of State Sector.

Yours faithfully,
Hony. Secretary

List of names of the members of the Legislative Assembly who belong to the Congress Party.¹

1. Mr. V.V. Giri
2. „ Nageswar Rao Pantalu
3. Prof. N.G. Ranga
4. Mr. S. Satyamurti
5. „ Muthuranga Mudaliar

¹In the Supplementary list the name of Sarat Chandra Bose was also included.

6. **Dr. T.S.S. Rajan**
7. **Mr. T.S. Avinashilingam Chetty**
8. **„ Samuel Aaron**
9. **„ P.S. Kumaraswami Raja**
10. **„ S. Vencatachalam Chetty**
11. **„ Anantasayana Iyengar**
12. **Lala Shamlal**
13. **Dr. Khan Sahib**
14. **Seth Govinddas**
15. **Mr. Ghanshyam Singh Gupta**
16. **Seth Sheodas Doga**
17. **Mr. B. Das**
18. **„ Nilakant Das**
19. **„ N. Bardoloi**
20. **„ Basanta Kumar Das**
21. **„ M. Asaf Ali**
22. **„ Dip Narain Sinha**
23. **„ Sri Kishen Sinha**
24. **„ Anugrah Naran Sinha**
25. **„ Bepin Behari Varma**
26. **„ Satyanarain Sinha**
27. **„ Ramnarain Sinha**
28. **Dr. Bhagwan Das**
29. **Sardar Jogendra Singh**
30. **Ch. Raghubir Narain Singh**
31. **Mr. Mohanlal Saxena**
32. **Sri Prakasa**
33. **Sri Kishen Dutt Paliwal**
34. **Munshi Iswar Saran**
35. **Pt. Govind Ballabh Pant**
36. **Mr. T.A.K. Sherwani**
37. **„ Abdul Yahil Baqui**
38. **Dr. G.V. Deshmukh**
39. **Mr. Bhulabhai Desai**
40. **„ N.V. Gadgil**
41. **„ K. Jedhe**
42. **„ S.K. Hosmani**

185. From Anugrah Narain Sinha¹

Patna
12.1.1935

Dear Sir,

During the last Assembly Election our workers and supporters out of nervousness and sheer anxiety to secure largest number of votes at the polls exceeded the sanctioned allotments placed at their disposal for the area concerned. We had given them express directions not to spend in excess of the amount as it was impossible for any one of the candidates or the Provincial Board to find any more money. In spite of this warning, workers in every district incurred expenditure in excess of the authorised amount. Now, after having borrowed from friends or sympathisers or having taken goods and services from petty traders, *halwai*, taxi-owners or printing presses, they are making demands from the Provincial Committee and sending urgent reminders to us to make good these deficits and are expressing their helplessness to meet them by local subscription. They are naturally anxious to save their credit in the locality as otherwise their future usefulness also is likely to be greatly impaired. In these circumstances I do not know what to do and naturally turn towards you for advice and guidance. The total amount which is thus demanded of us comes to Rs. 9171/6/6 and is explained in detail in statement "C" enclosed.

There is another matter which stands on slightly different footing and which I am desired to represent to you as President of the Parliamentary Board. Probably you may not be aware that a Provincial Parliamentary Board was formed in this Province with separate staff and office for running the last election. After the polling was over this body ceased to function without disposing of their assets and liabilities which were automatically transferred to the Provincial Congress Committee. On examination of their records it transpires that they have not been able to pay off a sum of Rs. 1178/5/9, being the outstanding bills of petrol, printing charges, and miscellaneous expenses and a sum of Rs 2,340 borrowed from the Provincial Congress Committee and some other gentlemen. It is impossible for the Provincial Congress Committee to bear this heavy burden specially when its finances are

¹Anugrah Narain Sinha (b. 1889); worked with Gandhi in Champaran, 1917; elected Assistant Secretary and then General Secretary of the Bihar PCC for several years; elected President, Bihar PCC, 1928; member, Central Assembly, 1935-7; general secretary, Bihar PCC, 1934-36; finance minister, Bihar Government, July 1937 to November 1939.

at the lowest ebb and some of these demands are pressing and urgent and must be met at once. I am, therefore, drawing your immediate and urgent attention to this state of affairs and request you to give us such help as may relieve our Committee of this heavy responsibility. I am sending a copy of this letter to the General Secretaries, Parliamentary Board and Indian National Congress.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,
Anugrah Narain Sinha

186. From C.R. Reddy

Chittoor
13.1.1935

Dear Dr. Ansari,

Sorry to trouble you so often with letters. After this, I hope I shall observe silence. You see the pitiable thing is that each community wants this or that, without bestowing a thought of (a) what it would give to the rest and (b) how it would construct a national structure. So please ask all the blessed communities, to prepare a complete constitution for India, as they are Indians, taking what they think is their due and giving to other factors—communities, economic interests and what they think is fair and to India what they hold to be her national requirements. The attitude “give me these” and the devil take charge of the rest is immoral and absurd. Will you please act on this suggestion and get our communalists to draft a constitution for India, taking a full survey of the entire field, instead of concentrating on themselves to the exclusion of country and sister factors?

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,
C.R. Reddy

187. From Abala Kanta Gupta and Kedarnath Bhattacharjee

Sylhet
13.1.35

Dear Sir,

We, the undersigned Congress workers of the District of Sylhet beg to bring to your notice the following facts relating to the election of Basanta Kumar Das, the only Parliamentary Board nominee returned to the Legislative Assembly from the Congress Province of Bengal.

When the Congress decided to set up candidates for contesting Legislative Assembly seats, a great difference arose amongst the Congressmen in Sylhet as in every other part of the country, as to the advisability of Congress again taking up the Council entry programme. Amongst the prominent Congressmen of the District of Sylhet who are in favour of the Council entry programme Basanta Kumar Das, by his unique position in the District in every respect and on account of his sacrifices, was thought to be the fittest candidate to be selected for contesting the Assembly seat from the Surma Valley cum Shillong (Non-Muslim) constituency.

But owing to his financial difficulties brought on by his long incarceration in connection with the civil disobedience movement he was very unwilling to offer himself as a candidate. Pressure was brought to bear upon him from all quarters in the shape of requests in order to induce him to accept the nomination of the Parliamentary Board. All the District Congress workers who were in favour of the Council entry programme were all of one mind about him to insist on his standing as a candidate from the Parliamentary Board. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy and Bhulabhai Desai, when they came to Shillong in May last, also summoned Das there along with Kshirode Chandra Deb, B.L., Anath Baudu Das, Editor, *Swadhikar*, and Kedarnath Bhattacharjee, Merchant. They had long consultations with Das and indicated their desire to aforesaid other Congressmen to have him as a Parliamentary candidate from Surma Valley. When the Congress Nationalist Party was formed and the revolt against the decision of the Congress Working Committee regarding the Communal Award was declared in Bengal, the situation in Sylhet also became complex and a very influential section of the Congress people declared their allegiance to the Congress Nationalist Party. It then became all the more necessary to have Das as the Congress Parliamentary Board candidate as it was thought that nobody else could give an effective fight to any Congress Nationalist candidate who might be set up from Sylhet. But Das was maintaining his attitude of not standing as a candidate chiefly on financial grounds.

Das's attitude was communicated to Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy, Secretary, Parliamentary Board, through Kshirode Chandra Deb, B.L., and Binoyendra Nath Palit, Advocate, Calcutta High Court. Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy was pleased to give the assurance that in case Das stood as a candidate, the Parliamentary Board would undertake to pay him at least Rs. 2,000 to meet the election expenses. That promise of Dr. Bidhan Chandra Roy was communicated to Das through Kshirode Chandra Deb, and Binoyendra Nath Palit. It was on this assurance given to Das that the Parliamentary Board would bear his election expenses that he could be induced to accept the nomination given to him by the Parliamentary Board. Das was, however, good enough not to insist for the payment of the money before he actually filed his nomination paper. The election deposit was made from his own pocket. When it was found after scrutiny of nomination papers that there was going to be a strong contest, Kshirode Chandra Deb sent repeated telegrams to Dr. Roy for money. Even telegrams were sent to him to Bombay where he had gone to attend the last session of the Congress. But no money was sent. Das was then compelled to meet all the expenses of the election campaign from his own pocket and by the time of the polling dates were nearing he was out of pocket to the extent of nearly Rs. 2,000.

At the time when the election campaign began, some of the Congressmen, including the President of the District Congress Committee, Sibendra Chandra Biswas, were in Calcutta in connection with B.P.C.C. election. They also asked for the promised sum from Dr. Roy through Binoyendra Nath Palit, Advocate. They were directed to manage by borrowing with the assurance that money would be paid afterwards. Those Congressmen including the undersigned who were in charge of the election campaign were taken aback by the attitude that was shown by Dr. Roy. Then, Das could not be asked to borrow any money and he was reluctant to do so and rather declared his intention of not making any arrangements for the polling days and rather preferred his election deposit to be forfeited. When that fact was communicated to Binoyendra Nath Palit, Benoy Babu sent Rs. 500 by T.M.O. 4 or 5 days before the polling was to begin. This sum was not adequate to meet the situation then when clamours for money from the workers from all the polling stations numbering about 104 were reaching the undersigned. To keep the honour and prestige of the Congress the undersigned had no other alternative than somehow procure money for the purpose. They pledged their slender means and somehow raised a loan of Rs. 800 and managed the election. There are also bills now outstanding for which another sum of Rs. 600 is necessary.

Just after the election Dr. Roy happened to pay a flying visit to Sylhet. The position was explained to him. He also then reiterated his assurance and said that after the Bengal elections were over he would send the money. But to our utter surprise, he did not send any sum although repeatedly asked for it. During the last X'mas time, the undersigned had been to Calcutta in connection with B.P.C.C. election. They approached Dr. Roy and asked him to redeem his promise. But he flatly refused to do so.

In the above circumstances, the undersigned have felt the painful necessity of approaching you in the hope of getting such help and direction from the Parliamentary Board as is necessary to meet the situation described above. The undersigned are humble workers for the Congress cause and have all along been working for the Congress in the abundant faith in Congress leaders. They never dreamt that a Congress leader of Dr. Roy's position who was in sole charge of the Parliamentary Board in Bengal would thus go back upon his word and have Das with his humble co-workers to their slender resources to meet such a situation. Das fought as a Congress nominee in the past three of the keenest contests in Assam for Council seat always with success. In all those elections he ungrudgingly bore all the expenses from his own pocket. Owing to the immense pecuniary loss he suffered by reason of his incarceration for 2 long years, involving the sacrifice of his lucrative practice at the Bar, his financial position necessarily became shaky and it was importunities of the Congress workers of the District which induced him to contest the last Assembly Election. The undersigned felt that all the Congressmen of the District owed him a moral duty not to allow him again to be involved in pecuniary losses by their action. The Parliamentary Board in Bengal also realised it and actually gave the solemn promise of bearing all his election expenses. Das depended upon the assurance and out of sheer goodness he did not insist upon the payment before he actually plunged himself in the fight.

He is not also asking to be paid the money he has spent from his own pocket. But we cannot ask him to pay the debt we have incurred for the election and also the outstanding bills we are now required to pay. The extent of the liabilities that have fallen upon us is Rs. 1,400. We, therefore, approach you with this statement of

facts and that the Parliamentary Board may kindly undertake to relieve us of the burden of debt of Rs. 1,400 that has fallen upon us.

Yours faithfully,
Abala Kanta Gupta
(Secretary)
Kedarnath Bhattacharjee
(Asth. Secretary)
Sylhet District Congress Committee

188. From Duni Chand¹

Ambala
13.1.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari Sahib,

As desired by Dr. Satyapal immediately before he was sent to jail, I am sending the accompanying statement for your information and such action as you may think proper to take. I particularly draw your attention to that part of the statement in which I have dealt with the attitude of Raizada Hans Raj, the members of his family and certain other Congressmen towards me as a Congress candidate. I beg to be excused for the trouble. With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
Duni Chand

¹1870-1945; presided over the Punjab Provincial Congress at Amritsar on July 27, 1918; led procession against the Rowlatt Act in Lahore.

Why Congress lost Jullundur seat

Though provoked by certain newspapers and individuals to speak out I intentionally kept silent over the causes of my defeat, lest any public communication on my part might be taken as an outburst of a defeated man. I must break the vow of silence as systematic efforts have been and are being made to suppress the truth. Even Dr. Satyapal who is not in a position to justify himself and others who worked with

him to uphold Congress cause in the Punjab are being discredited and this I cannot stand. Immediately before Dr. Satyapal had to go to jail, he expressed his wish to me that I should tell Congress leaders and the public the whole truth about my election and hence it has become all the more my duty to do so. It is a pity that some men even now try to discredit Dr. Satyapal unblushingly even though the Punjab has not produced a braver and truer man.

By this time every person concerned or interested should know that I never desired to seek election to the Legislative Assembly and duty was simply forced upon me after Raizada Hans Raj had declined to take it upon himself. It is true that after I had accepted the duty in pursuance of the unanimous wish of the Working Committee of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee I declined to retreat. It has been advertised wrongly that Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya was prepared to let Raizada Hans Raj go unopposed. He was prepared to let either of us go unopposed as he told me clearly at Lahore provided Lala Shamal withdrew in favour of his nominee but this was out of question. I hold in my possession a letter from Mahatma Gandhi and another from Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel from which it is clear that neither Shamal nor myself was to be replaced. It is again being said that Fakir Chand was prepared to withdraw in favour of Raizada Hans Raj. There is no truth in this. On 18th October 1934, the nomination day, I personally asked him outside the house of the Retiring Officer if he could retire in any case but he declined to do so and said nothing about his retiring in favour of Raizada. After the nomination papers of both of us were accepted I sent a telegram to him and about ten more telegrams to common friends at Lahore to persuade him not to oppose me and I got a telegraphic reply from him that he had a greater desire to serve the country than myself and that I should retire in his favour. On the nomination day and on the scrutiny day I was with Raizada and even before that I used to meet him frequently but he never told me that Fakir Chand was prepared to retire in his favour. Those who knew Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya and his grim resolution to oppose the Congress, and I know both to my cost, also knew that he was not prepared to let any Congressman go unopposed from Jullundur Constituency. It is also being said that I was not popular with the Jullundur Constituency voters. I was known to them only as a Congressman and as a humble public servant of the Punjab and I dare say they did not and could not find any fault with me as such. It is further being said that I am given to the use of strong language. Throughout the whole constituency you will not find a single person who could point out a single objectionable word in my election statement or in any of election speeches, and being anxious to secure the goodwill of every voter I could not afford to use strong language.

As to the causes of my defeat, there was the false and puerile cry of the Communal Award and the personality of Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya to sway the minds of the voters, he did not hesitate even to go to small places and make personal appeals to the voters. He was a tremendous force against the Congress at least in the Punjab. On the very day that Fakir Chand came forward to stand I was told by a friend of his that all the Aggarwal voters, 1,700 strong, will march in a body in the arena of polling booths though I was not prepared to believe it at the time; but I realised later on that this was only too true and about 1,000 Aggarwal voters out of the total strength of nearly 5,000 voters voted *en bloc* against me with a few honourable and patriotic exceptions. In Hoshiarpur and Jullundur districts and, particularly in the former, a special kind of official influence was used against me and in many places the police officers pursued me and noted down my utterances in public meetings. In rural areas the official and semi-official machinery was more in evidence. It was in my presence that the other party asked a voter to take the *sarkari parchi* as if mine was non-*Sarkari*. There was the press of the Punjab, both English and Vernacular, to poison the minds of the voters and some Vernacular papers heaped 'the choicest epithets on us and one Vernacular paper did not hesitate to describe the Congress candidate as *Ghaddar* (betrayers of the country). There was an army of relations and others that won peculiar pleasure in opposing the Congress in the Punjab and overwhelmed the voters by the sheer force of their numbers. All the big influential people representing the capitalists and vested interests with which the Punjab is infested and the Hindu Sabhaites made a common cause in making the Assembly Elections a test of their strength to fight out the elections under the new constitution against the Congress in the Punjab.

The above were perhaps the natural causes with which the Congress had to contend. There were other causes as well which I should describe as regrettable and even lamentable. The College Section of the Arya Samaj with which I had been identified for the first 20 years after I started life as I have been identified with the Congress for the later 2 years and the Gurukul Section of the Arya Samaj worked against the Congress. Some of the tallest men of the Arya Samaj not only worked against me individually but mobilised all the forces of the Arya Samaj including the teachers and the students of certain institutions of Arya Samaj. One of the foremost leaders of the Arya Samaj took pride in stating in a public speech that he would even oppose God if He were to stand as an Assembly candidate on the Congress ticket what to say of Duni Chand. Though I consider it a suicidal step on the part of the Arya Samaj to oppose the Congress but it is undeniable that it is dominated by anti-Congress interests and wants

to pit itself against the Congress. At the same time, I must admit in fairness that in the ranks of the Arya Samaj there were some Congressmen who were as patriotic as other Congressmen. The part played by the well-known Sondhis of Jullundur which includes among its members some prominent Congressmen has simply staggered me as a Congressman. I have got in my possession posters published in the name and on behalf of the distinguished members of this family against me and distributed all over the constituency. Not only they were content with publishing posters, some of them went about in the constituency and worked against me and sent letters to their friends and relations to help the rival candidate. Even the innocent girls of Kandy Mahavidyalya were made to solicit votes for the opposite party. It is true that Raizada Hans Raj voted for me and even went to two or three places with others during the election for me, but he had his own peculiar ways to stand by the Congress. Before he went to attend the Bombay Session of the Congress he had told me that he would be able to manage and control the members of his family, and that I should leave the matter in his hands. Before he returned from Bombay on the morning of 31st October 1934 certain members of his family had already published posters against me. When I went to his house from the railway station with Mr. Bhulabhai Desai and Raizada Hans Raj, I took him aside in his compound and told him what the members of his family had done and that he should control them. And on this he addressed me angrily and loudly within the hearing of some of the members of his family in the following words: "I will give freedom of action to the members of my family including my own wife and daughter and permit them to work and to vote against you if they chose to do so. I will not quarrel with the members of my family for your sake." I requested him to go with me to the town voters but he did not. I regret that a family of which certain members are prominent Congressmen and which owes its influence among other things to its associations with the Congress and the foremost Congress leaders should have acted towards the Congress in this way. It is sometimes said in certain interested quarters that I am haughty and autocratic, but I can challenge anybody to point out a single line written by me or a single word uttered by me in course of my election campaign that would lend support to this allegation. In public meetings I earnestly appealed to the Sondhi family and its members to stand by the Congress and did my best to please them, but all this was in vain.

Several other persons, both male and female, professing and claiming to belong to the Congress but having nothing of Congress about them exploited the Congress in working against me and if an

enquiry be held into this matter the result will be startling. Some of the most prominent Congressmen of the Punjab kept aloof from the election except one or two of them sought publicity by abusing Dr. Satyapal and others who have stood by the Congress. This kind of conduct on the part of some of the Congressmen in this province has been a bane of this Province and prevented the Congress from becoming a power as it is in other provinces.

I am firmly of opinion that unless the material and spiritual resources of the other provinces are freely offered to the Punjab the details of which I may disclose later, the state of things in the Punjab will continue to be bad enough. I shall have to disclose the dismal story more fully sometime later.

In order to avoid any possible misunderstanding I must pay a tribute of respect and praise to hundreds of persons both Congressmen and non-Congressmen who stood by the Congress and by me.

189. From Syed Abdullah Brelvi

Bombay
19.1.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari,

So now the Congress Parliamentary Party has begun its work in earnest. I am very glad that the selection of office-bearers has been made without much difference of opinion. Mr. Bhulabhai and Mr. Satyamurti and Asaf Ali will make a very happy combination. I hope by the time this reaches you, you must have had discussions with Jinnah and that a satisfactory understanding between his party and the Congress Party will have been arrived at. If it is possible to come to a definite settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question more than half of our work will be accomplished. From my conversation with him I found him to be ready to accept any honourable compromise. If only you and Mahatmaji put pressure on him. I hope that wretched Communal Award may yet be substituted by an agreed scheme.

Prof. K. T. Shah is accompanying Mr. Mathindas Vasanji whom he will help in his Assembly work. He will be staying there throughout the session. So far as I can see the outstanding defect of our M.L.A.'s is the lack of complete understanding of questions relating to finance and currency. In this respect, Shah will be of immense use to the Congress Party. But you know that Mr.

Bhulabhai and he do not get on well together and Shah has a keen sense of his self-respect. He is capable of doing immense work provided the right atmosphere is there. If he is officially appointed as economic and financial adviser to the Parliamentary Board or the Parliamentary Party, he will do everything. But if his position is uncertain and is to depend on the whims of the leader, I am afraid he will not work. I hope, therefore, you will kindly use your good offices, to bring Bhulabhai and Shah together and come to a definite understanding about his position. His services are at the disposal of the Party. They are invaluable and they must be used to the best advantage.

I hope you have not been over working yourself and have been keeping well.

With love,
Yours affectionately,
S. A. Brelvi

190. From Prabhu Lal Varma

Bareilly
22.1.1935

Dear Dr. M.A. Ansari,

The first impression that your personality made upon me was when I read Mahatma's statement in Fyzabad jail; the second was when I read your clear-cut speech delivered at Bombay on return from Europe. You are really one of the chief lieutenants. I fully realise the difficulty that a nationalist Muslim like you will have to face and admire the sense of responsibility that you have been showing all along. God has offered us the best opportunity to be availed of and show to the world that we are capable of holding the sway over the destinies of the dumb poor millions in every stage of civilization inhabiting this country, almost a continent. A right move in the right direction would save India from falling into the dark dismal abyss of degradation. If our aspirations for achieving a responsible form of government are true and if we have sufficient experience at our command to develop the necessary trait of character required for the discharge of duties incumbent upon the aspirant we must give them a bodily shape by showing that we are united in submitting to the rule of the majority, ready to

sacrifice its own interests for creating the trust in the minds of the minority, making it willing to accept its decision, forgetting the innumerable differences existing. If Mr. Jinnah's party justifies its existence as its name signifies, it will be able to keep the balance to its right position. I have no faith in conversion but in inversion. Change of heart is the remedy for all ills. I know the human weakness that confronts me at every step and succeeds in making me a tool to serve its purpose. Every profession is noble, worth keeping and equally necessary for the upkeep of the social edifice. In every sphere of life we have to deal with human nature and it is very difficult to find out what is truth in a particular instance. We are mere tools in the hands of the Almighty and must work up to his will. Mahatma's programme of Village Industries Association and the use of the word revolution by Acharya Kripalani¹ in that connection have supplied sufficient material for the statesman to dilate upon and draw its own conclusions. My leave.

Yours sincerely,
Prabhu Lal Varma (Vakil)

¹B. 1888; General Secretary of the Indian National Congress 1934-46 and President, 1946; one of the founders of the Congress Democratic Front and the Praja Socialist Party.

191. From Agatha Harrison

2, Cranbourne Court
Albert Bridge Road, S.W. 11
Battersea 2400
29.1.1935

Dear Dr. Ansari,

At last the *Manchester Guardian* published your article in the issue of January 23rd. It did not appear before because Mr. Crozier was anxious to get a series of six articles. These appeared daily from Jan. 17—with one from Mr. S. Sinha, then Mr. N. M. Joshi, then Babu Rajendra Prasad, Mr. Ghuznavi, Dr. Ambedkar—then yours. So you have had the "last word". I enclose the editorial comment that appeared on the same day as your article.

C. F. Andrew's broadcast last Tuesday was a great help, for he

said the things that needed badly to be said. By this talk—he reached millions of men and women, and I can tell from the letters that are pouring in—from the incessant telephones—something of the impression his remarks made. He has of course been criticised severely too. But the general opinion seems to be that his disturbing talk has made people think.

Yours very sincerely,
Agatha Harrison

192. From M.K. Gandhi

8.3.1935

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I understand your letter. I shall not strive with you but plead with Rajenbabu to release you. I can see quite clearly that if we are to have your services for many a year, you should not have any responsibility to shoulder. I see too that you must go to Europe from time to time.

My love to you all.

Yours,
M.K. Gandhi

193. To Rajendra Prasad

Delhi
23.3.1935

My dear Rajenbabu,

I am writing this letter under great compulsion of pressing personal and private necessity. It is not without a great searching of the heart and considerable hesitation that I am impelled to do so. I had written to Mahatmaji on the subject and he told me he would plead for me to you. I hope he had time and opportunity of doing so. I, therefore, need not cover the same ground again for it is not very pleasing to do so, besides it would be an unwarranted waste of your time which today is more than it has ever been the property of the nation.

Ever since I had a sharp attack of malaria in October last, during my election tour in Hyderabad (Deccan), my health had a setback. I

have been carrying on with some amount of difficulty. I have been having cardiac seizures which I have managed to ward off. But on 13th March I had a very sharp attack of malarial fever in which the rigour (shivering) lasted for over four hours and the temperature shot up about 105°F. I had a very severe cardiac seizure which might easily have proved fatal. It has left me very weak. I find my health now quite shattered, unable to carry on even the most controlled amount of professional work, which unfortunately owing to heavy financial burdens I must go on doing. I have, therefore, been forced to the conclusion that I must lighten my public responsibilities at the earliest moment. I had spoken to you in Bombay and again in Patna of releasing me from the membership of the Congress Working Committee and the Presidentship of the Congress Parliamentary Board. You pressed me to stay on at least till the first session of the Assembly was over. In deference to your wishes I decided to carry on, although I knew I was quite unfit to do so. Now, however, the session of the Assembly is coming to a close and in April, there will be fresh election of the members of the C.P.B. I, therefore, beg you to give me permission to resign. Of course, short of being a member of the Congress Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board, I would be always available to render whatever service it would lie in my power to do so.

I do not know whether it would be possible for me to go out of India for rest, change and treatment this summer, but, if it is at all possible I would certainly avail myself of the opportunity. That is an additional reason for vacating my seats in the Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board.

I am enclosing in this cover my formal resignations from the membership of the Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board.

If you would permit me to express my views as regards my successors, I would suggest to you the names of Dr. B.C. Roy for the Working Committee and Mr. Bhulabhai Desai as the President of the Congress Parliamentary Board.

With very kind regards,

Yours ever sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

194. To Rajendra Prasad

Delhi
23.3.1935

Dear Sir,

Owing to failing health and as advised by specialists who have been consulted, I beg leave to tender my resignation from the Congress Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board.

I remain,
Dear Sir,
Your humble servant,
M.A. Ansari

195. From Agatha Harrison

2, Cranbourne Court
Albert Bridge Road, S.W. 11
Battersea 2400
25.3.1935

Dear Mahatmaji, Rajendra Babu and Dr. Ansari,

Will you please excuse this joint letter but it must catch the air mail and writing in this way saves time.

At the meeting of the above Group¹ this afternoon, I was asked to convey to you a need that some of us feel is very real at this juncture, *i.e.*, for having on the spot in the immediate future, representative Indian men and women. We understand that representatives of the Princes will be coming for consultation, that Pandit Malaviya (and others with him) expect to come, and in addition individuals in their private capacity. We would urge upon you the desirability of someone who could speak with authority from the Congress being here too. From time to time we have suggested Mr. Rajagopalachari's name, as he is not occupied in the day to day work of the Assembly. That he is needed in India, we know but if you were at this end we believe you

¹Indian Conciliation Group of which Agatha Harrison was the Hon. Secretary.

would appreciate the circumstances and understand why we make this request. If a number of individuals are to be in London with access to responsible circles, then it is important that one of your trusted people should be available as well.

I was asked to write at once to you about this in the hope that in some way this situation can be met.

Yours sincerely,
Agatha Harrison

196. From Nisar Ahmad Khan Sherwani

Aligarh
30.3.1935

My dear Doctor Sahib,

I have received your very kind and affectionate letter. I leave myself entirely in your hands in the matter of contesting the Assembly seat as well as in all other matters. I am making immediate inquiries to ascertain if my name is on the electoral roll of this or any other constituency. Fida has gone round and influential persons have been promising support.

But Yamin Khan has already started work and the likelihood is that the election will be hotly contested. You know my dear brother had financial worries. So far as I have been able to ascertain we have to pay immediately Rs. 1,100 and odd as the last instalment on his car and already received a notice that unless this amount is paid by the 5th April the car will be taken possession of as it was sold to him on the hire purchase system. There are other bills in Delhi and here which need immediate payment. Besides this, Bhabiji's ornaments were pawned by him which I think must be redeemed and returned to her and I am doing my level best to find money to meet all these liabilities.

I am, therefore, more crippled now financially than I have ever been before. Under the circumstances it will be very difficult for me to find money for the election expenses and it will be impossible to contest the seat unless the Congress can help me with funds.

Fida has taken the car to Lahore in order to sell it. If he succeeds I shall be able to clear off most pressing of the liabilities. He will probably see you on his way to Lahore and talk matters over.

In case my name is not on the roll, and the Directors of the Saraswati Sugar Syndicate do not agree to Fida's contesting the seat,

another candidate will have to be put up who could subscribe to the Congress views. I tried to induce Khwaja Sahib. The letter I have received from him shows that he cannot make up his mind to contest the seat.

The Congress will not like to loose the seat and I think that persons can be found who would be willing to contest the election on Congress tickets.

I received a letter from Mr. Venkata Chelam enclosing the bills from Dr. Zafaryab Husain and Dr. Sen. Kindly ask him to assure them that I shall make payment as soon as I can.

Yours ever affectionately,
Nisar

197. From Rajendra Prasad

Patna
1.4.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I have received your letter together with Mahatmaji's note. In view of the circumstances you mentioned it is not possible for me to resist your wishes. As I have told you I should have very much wished you to continue and if it were at all possible I would not let you go. Because I feel that your presence on the Working Committee is not only helpful in reaching decisions but a source of strength otherwise also which we can ill-afford to lose at the present moment. But unfortunately your health and other considerations do not permit your continuing as a member and I feel that it will not be right to force your hands any more. With the greatest regret I shall, therefore, accept your resignation. May I take this opportunity of conveying to you my grateful thanks for your support and help which you have always so ungrudgingly given to me. I hope however that your interest will continue unabated and I shall be able to count upon your assistance and I know it will be given to me equally ungrudgingly in the future.

As regards your suggestion about your successor, under the constitution the Parliamentary Board will now become an elected body, and I take it it will elect its own President. Anyway we shall consider this

matter at the time of the next Working Committee. I think that Mr. Bhulabhai Desai will most probably be elected. As regards nomination to the Working Committee you know the state of party feeling in Bengal. Dr. Roy is no longer the President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and we cannot ignore the fact that in the Assembly elections we have lost all the Hindu seats in Bengal. I am not sure if his nomination will at all be popular in Bengal. But I am going to consult friends about the matter and will not do anything without giving the matter my best consideration.

I hope you are keeping fairly good health. I am all right now.

Yours sincerely,
Rajendra Prasad

198. To Agatha Harrison

Delhi
6.4.1935

My dear Miss Harrison,

I have both your letters dated 22nd, 25th March regarding your desire of sending (1) someone to England to represent the Congress in the coming weeks, (2) the considered opinion relating to the constitution at present in the committee stage in the House of Commons and (3) the resolutions passed by the various representative bodies in India and the relevant speeches thereon including those made in the Legislative Assembly. I asked Mr. Bhulabhai Desai and Pant to see me but unfortunately they are kept very busy at the tailend of the Assembly session and have not been able to spare time to discuss these questions with me. My own personal view about these matters is that Mr. Rajagopalachari's visit to England seems very difficult, if not impossible. But, Mr. Bhulabhai Desai does generally spend his vacations abroad and although I would not like to say anything definite before finding out from him, his visit to England is not so difficult as that of others. I am hoping that at the forthcoming meeting in Jubbulpore he would be elected to fill my place as the Chairman of the Congress Parliamentary Board. As regards the second item, the resolution passed at Patna represents the considered opinion of the Congress and it is, that no amount of changes in the present constitution could make it acceptable to the Congress. I do not know what

Mr. Kripalani has written, but whatever he has written, would be his personal opinion. The above is the view of the Congress Working Committee. As regards the third item, that is simply a matter of compiling the relevant resolutions and important quotations from speeches and I see no reason why it could not be done by the Congress office in one of the Congress bulletins. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru started these bulletins and they appeared from time to time and embodied in a concise and handy form such information. Mr. Kripalani as the Secretary of the Congress can do it without any sanction. It can also be done on the initiative of the President of the Congress. I am writing to both of them to see if this is feasible.

I am sorry to say that I have been keeping very bad health during the last few months and have been compelled to retire both from the Congress Working Committee and the Congress Parliamentary Board. But, apart from active participation, my advice and moral support would be always at the service of the country.

Mr. Sherwani's death was a great loss to the Congress generally and the Nationalist Muslim Group particularly. I am afraid it is irreparable.

With very kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

199. From Agatha Harrison

2, Cranbourne Court
Albert Bridge Road, S.W. 11
Battersea 2400
11.4.1935

Dear Dr. Ansari,

I have only just heard of the death of Mr. Sherwani, and I want to write to you at once—for I can imagine faintly what his loss will mean to you. I recall last year at your home seeing him with you—watching him at the Ranchi Conference and seeing the camaraderie that existed between you. At a time like this such a colleague can ill be spared and his death will leave a gap in your circle—and mean a deep personal loss to you at a time when you need every ounce of support in your difficult task.

There never seems anything much to be said at times like this—but I do want you to know that my heart goes out to you.

Mr Kelley rang me up to tell me how ill his wife had been. But we agreed that if this had to be, she could be in no better hands anywhere in the world, than under your loving care. I shall never forget what you did for me last year, and in this serious illness of hers, I know what it means to her to be in your hands.

Mr Kelley also tells me that you plan to come over for your cure. Now you know what I want to ask you—that you come here just as soon as you can. Is this asking too much? You will recall that when you were here last year, people were beginning to go away. And this year they will probably do this sooner for it has been a gruelling time politically and people are tired. And this time, you will not come in your private capacity, but as President of the Parliamentary Board, and let us do all we can to make this visit very worthwhile. I have in mind preparing papers for good interviews, a meeting in the House, a meeting at the Royal Institute of International Affairs—in addition to seeing the people you met before. Let me know what you think. I know how tired you are—how ill you have been—but if you could get here by the first week in July at the latest we could make good use of a fortnight, if you could spare it. Of course if you could get here while the Bill is in the Lords—even at the twelfth hour—a dent might be made—for we could collect to more flexible among them for you to talk to.

Please give my love to Begum Ansari.

Yours very sincerely,
Agatha Harrison

200. From Ahmad Said¹

Chhatari
30.4.1936,

My dear Doctor Sahib,

In pursuance of the decision of the Court I wrote to His Highness of

¹Nawab Hafiz Ahmad Said Khan of Chhatari (1888-); a leading landlord of Chhatari in Aligarh district, elected an Aligarh trustee in 1911; president, All-Indi a Muslim Rajput Conference, 1923; member of UP Legislative Council, 1920-5, minister of Industries, UP, 1923-5; home member of UP, 1926-33; Acting Governor, 1928 and 1933; member of the first and second Round Table Conferences; prime minister of Hyderabad, 1941. The Nawab was the leader of the Zamindar Party in the UP Legislative Council in 1920s, and was one of the most influential Muslim landlord politicians in the 1920s and 1930s.

Bhopal requesting him to fix a date to receive a deputation of the members of the Court. I have now received a communication from His Highness in reply in which he has given reasons for his resignation. His Highness has surveyed the history of the changes from 1928 mentioning the Rahimtoola Committee Report and the Resolution of the Court on that Report. His Highness thinks that the present decision of the Court will "lead to a complete reversal of that policy" and therefore, he will not allow himself to remain connected in any official capacity with the University. His Highness says, "and so far as this is concerned my decision, which has been taken after the most mature and careful consideration, should be treated as final."

In the end while assuring the Court of his abiding interest in the well-being of the University, His Highness has been pleased to say that "If in spite of what I have stated above the members forming the deputation consider it necessary to take the trouble of visiting Bhopal, it will give me the greatest pleasure to receive them. Any date convenient to the members between the 10th and 20th of May will suit me. I shall be delighted if during their stay in Bhopal they will kindly accept my hospitality and stay with me at the Palace as my guests."

I shall be grateful to know your opinion about it.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
Ahmad Said

201. To Ahmad Said

3.5.1935

My dear Nawab Saheb,

I received your letter of 30th April on the evening of the 1st of May. It has made me anxious regarding the future of the Muslim University.

You are unaware of my opinion regarding the recent decision of the Court. I have felt that the Government have been wrongly advised regarding their choice and their support of the Vice-Chancellor has not only completely reversed the policy based on the Rahimtoola Committee Report, which had the complete approval of the Government and the support of the entire Muslim public, but has created an impression of undue interference in the internal affairs of the great Muslim educational institution. At the present juncture the public opinion

amongst the Muslims is that of resentment, and the retirement of a universally popular Chancellor who is highly respected by the Muslim people both due to his own personal qualities and for the great services rendered by him and his revered mother to the cause of Muslim education, from the helm of the University, would create deep disappointment.

As a member of the Court of the Muslim University, I feel that whilst we should do everything to cultivate the goodwill of the government, we should avoid alienating the support of our own people. The retirement of His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal from Chancellorship would have a very adverse effect on the Muslims of India and would produce far-reaching reactions on the future of the Muslim University. We should, therefore, do everything in our power to prevent his retirement. I feel that if His Excellency the Viceroy would ask His Highness to reconsider his decision that might induce him to do so. And, I think, you are the best person to approach His Excellency in this matter, provided of course, you agree with me that we must do all in our power to induce His Highness the Nawab of Bhopal to remain as our Chancellor.

We have not much time at our disposal and so you will have to be expeditious in the matter. Should you have succeeded in this matter, a formal deputation would wait on His Highness at Bhopal and he may be induced with greater certainty to give a favourable answer to our request. I shall be anxiously awaiting your reply.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
M.A. Ansari

202. From C. F. Andrews

Santiniketan
20.12.1935

My dear Dr. Ansari,

I received your very kind letter and would have much liked to come to the Congress but I cannot get away from the flooded area relief work in Orissa at this time. I am sending Mahatmaji two resolutions, one about East Africa and one about South Africa. The subject will be safe in his hands.

I do hope you got my letters quite safely with its notes on South East Africa.

Please express my regret at being unable to be present but I cannot leave Orissa just now.

Your affectionate friend,
C. F. Andrews

APPENDIX A

Speech delivered at the All-India Muslim League Session, Delhi, 1918¹

Members of the All-India Muslim League, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have been entrusted with the duty of welcoming you, on behalf of the Muslim citizens of Delhi, to this ancient city, which was once the seat of Muslim power and the home of Muslim civilization and culture; and which has, alas! also seen their gradual decline and decay. This assembly of Musalmans, from all parts of India, awakens in one's imagination the memory of many a brilliant gathering which, in the palmy days of its Muslim rulers, Delhi must have witnessed. It was this city from where such great saints as Khwaja Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, Sultan Nizamuddin Aulia, Khwaja Baqi-Billah, Shah Kalimullah Jahanbadi and famous divines as Shaikh Abdul Haqq Muhaddis Dehlavi, Shah Fakhruddin, Shah Abdul Aziz (May the blessings of God be upon them all) sent forth the light of Muslim religion, Muslim theology and Islamic philosophy, not only to the four corners of India but beyond its geographical limits, to Bokhara and Samarkand, to Persia and Baghdad and even to Mecca and Medina. It was Delhi that gave to India that beautiful language which is the offspring of all that is sweet in Arabic, Persian and Turkish on one side and Sanskrit and Prakrit on the other. From the mere *lingua* of the camp followers it rose to the eminence of being designated the Urdu-i-Mualla of the Red Palace and gradually it became the acknowledged

¹Ansari's speech at the Muslim League meeting was acclaimed by the Muslim press as 'representing the true feelings of Indian Mussalmans'. According to an intelligence report, his address with its 'quotations from the Quran and the support of the *ulama* is producing anger and hate among them. The address has been widely read and by now every Mussalman knows that the Holy Places are going out of the hands of the Muslim sovereign and that the English are responsible'. Home Political (B), January 1919, 160-63, National Archives of India.

literary, economic and political language of the country. It was Delhi again which blended the Indian with the highly polished Persian Art, and gave to the world that eminent poet, sufi and genius, Amir Khusrau, and the great philosopher-poet Asadullah Khan Ghalib. Delhi, under the Muslim name Shahjahanabad, with its Jumma Masjid, the Diwan-i-Aam and the Diwan-i-Khas, shall always give to India the highest place in the world of architecture, as much as that lofty monument, the Qutub Minar, holds high the mighty power of the Faith to which it was consecrated as one of the towers of the Masjid-i-Quvvat-ul-Islam. Time has not yet effaced the landmarks of Islam in the history of this country nor has the dust of centuries buried the footprints of our ancestors. Gentlemen, I welcome you to the cradle of Islamic civilization in India and to the city of Muslim memories.

Our Departed Friends

Since we met last at Calcutta, we have lost some of our leading men and sincere and zealous workers. The death of Nawab Haji Mohammad Ishaq Khan,¹ at this most momentous period in the history of our country has removed from amongst us not only a true patriot but also a great champion of the rights of progressive Muslims of India. He had a courage which did not fail at the critical time and his support one could rely upon even during the most adverse circumstances. The late Justice Khan Bahadur Mian Mohammad Shah Din leaves a gap in our society which will be difficult to fill. As a great lawyer and scholar he was held in high esteem in our community. Another and a still more painful loss has been that of Shaikh Vilayat Ali Qidwai of Barabanki, who was snatched away, in the prime of life from a most fruitful literary career. As a humourist *Bambooque* was unequalled. His numerous sketches in *The Comrade* and *The New Era* form classics that will always keep his memory fresh and green. Last of all, we mourn the death of that silent worker, great thinker and philosopher, Dr. Abdur Rahman Bijnori, who in his simplicity and modesty coupled with great learning, reminded one of the scholars and masters of early Islamic days. The Muslim University, whenever it comes into existence, will bear the impress of his

¹Ishaq Khan (1860-1918) was a descendant of Murtaza Khan, who received the jagir of Palwal in Gurgaon from Lord Lake and purchased the estate of Jehangirabad in Meerut at an auction sale of 1813. He was appointed to the Statutory Civil Service in 1884 and, apart from four years on loan to Rampur State as a minister, he remained there till he retired in January 1913 as a district and session judge. He was also Secretary of the Aligarh College from 1913 to 1918.

mind. The Sultania College, a child of his imagination, will not receive his fostering care and Muslim Education in India will be poorer in the loss of its best champion. He was devoted to the service of Urdu and at the time of his sad death, he was engaged in writing a learned introduction to the *Diwan-i-Ghalib*, shortly to be published by the *Anjuman-i-Taraqq-i-Urdu*. May Almighty Allah give their souls eternal rest and peace. Amen!

Muslim World Situation

Temporal Power of Islam

Gentlemen, we are meeting today at a very critical period in the history of the world. The Great War, in which the nations of the East and the West were engaged has come to an end and bloodshed and carnage have ceased. But, although the war is over, our anxieties have only begun. Momentous issues hang in the balance and the entire course of human history is to be determined, at least for a very long time to come, by the decisions of the Peace Conference. It is an anxious moment for every nation, but for the Musalmans it is especially so. Never in their varied history of over 1,300 year have they been faced with a situation as it is today.

Gentlemen, the British Government, in its international engagements and relations, has always claimed as a matter of right, the attention of the world because the King of England rules over the largest number of Muslim subjects. But it must be remembered that every right has a corresponding duty and responsibility, which a government, howsoever strong, cannot afford to ignore. The time has now come when the Musalman subjects of His Majesty demand that the ministers of the Crown, who are in charge of the destinies of the British Empire, shall do their duty by the Musalmans of India.

We all know how Islam has suffered in its temporal power since the latter half of the nineteenth century. Each succeeding generation has witnessed the gradual disruption of the House of Islam. Diverse reasons have been brought forth and plausible explanations have not been wanting; lofty political doctrines have been invented to screen

aggressive designs, and humanitarian principles have been advanced to justify the acts of robbery done to Islamic kingdoms. The *white man's burden* too has been paraded before an innocent and all-believing world. But bereft of all the verbiage of innocent looking doctrines and high sounding principles, this tragedy can be traced to the common dislike of the Muslim of the avarice and greed of the chancellories of Europe.

That belt of Muslim states which once extended from the shores of the Atlantic to the confines of the Chinese Empire has, bit by bit, shrunk to a mere shadow. In Europe, the Northern littoral of the Black Sea, Wallachia, Reumelia, Greece and Macedonia have been lost, one after the other, in quick succession. In Africa, Morocco, Algeria, Tunis, Tripoli and Egypt are gone. Caucasia and the Khanates of Central Asia shared the same fate, and the integrity and independence of Persia, after the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, is a huge political joke. Even the Bedouin of the African and Arabian deserts is being reduced to give up his nomadic life and take to the refinements of *cafes chantants*. Turkey, which has fought the battles of Islam for many centuries, is in imminent and grave danger of being parcelled out into small states to the great detriment of the Muslim world.

The Khilafat

It is an acknowledged fact of history that in 918 A.H. the last Khalifa of the house of Abbas, Mohammad Abbasi of Egypt, transferred, with the consent and concurrence of the Musalman people, the office and dignity of the Khilafat and the spiritual sovereignty of Islam along with the symbols of this exalted office, the sword, the standard and the cloak of the Prophet, to Sultan Saleem, the Great. The Sultan, accompanied by Mohammad Abbasi, took these holy relics to Istambol. It is from this day that the Sultans of the House of Osman have received the honoured appellations of *Khalifat-ul-Muslimeen*, *Sultan-ul-Islam* and *Khadim-in-Haramain-ish-Sharifain* and the Musalmans of the world have recognised them as their spiritual *Imams* and the successors of the messengers of God. Not only the *harams* of Mecca and Medina but throughout the wide expanse where the religion of Islam is practised, prayers for their success and glory are offered every Friday and on the occasions of the two *Idds*.

Shareef Barakaat of Mecca, on getting a *firman* from Sultan Saleem, acknowledged him as Khalifa and ordered the name of the Turkish

Sultan to be introduced in the prayers. No Shareef has, since then, questioned the authority of the rulers of Turkey and even Shareef Husain recognised the Sultan as the lawful Khalifa and submitted to his spiritual overlordship.

During the course of the present war, actuated by personal ambitions and selfish interests, Shareef Husain raised the standard of revolt against the unquestioned Khalifa of Islam, whom he himself had recognised as such. By this action of his he not only disregarded a rule of political morality, but, according to Muslim belief and religious teaching, broke an explicit and clear commandment of God and His Prophet. It has been distinctly ordered in the Holy Qur'an that:—

If one party becomes disloyal to the other (which is in power), fight against the one that has become disloyal until it returns to the bidding of God.

And the Prophet has said that:

Various dissensions shall take place after me. If any one attempts to divide the unity of my people, kill him with the sword whosoever he be. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

The scholars and divines of Islam in commenting upon this *Hadith* have said that:

Behead the person who revolts against the *Imam* even if he be superior and more exalted (than the *Imam* himself) and even if you also consider him to be in the right and more exalted. (*Mirqat*)

The Prophet has further said that:

If allegiance is demanded for two Khalifas, kill the latter among them. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

These are the definite and conclusive injunctions which leave no room for doubt, and, therefore, on religious grounds, the revolt of the Shareef transgresses the law of Islam and consequently is totally *Haram* (forbidden and sinful).

The Holy Places

The most important duty of the Khalifa is to keep the Holy Places

under Muslim protection. The protection means nothing less than the complete and unquestioned sovereignty of the Sultan over them and their immunity from interference on the part of non-Muslims. It must not be lost sight of that every age has its special needs and requirements and with the change of times these needs and requirements also change. No sovereign today can discharge this great religious duty, satisfactorily and faithfully, unless the essentials of modern civilization are within his reach. He should in the first place, command the sympathies and support of the people whose holy places he guards and protects. The economic and natural resources at his disposal should be adequate and effective to enable him to defend these places. His councillors and ministers should be well-versed in modern arts and sciences and they should possess sound experience of modern diplomacy and statecraft. He should be well equipped with all the latest weapons of war. For the last four hundred years, in the opinion of the Musalmans, no Muslim sovereign has satisfied the above conditions better than the Sultans of the Turkish Empire. It is the firm conviction and deliberate judgement of the Muslim world that, from the time of Sultan Saleem down to the present 'day, the House of Osman has discharged its duties in respect of the Holy Places, to its entire satisfaction. Therefore, His Imperial Majesty Sultan Waheeduddin Muhammad VI, is the one and the only Musalman who is and can be the rightful Commander of the Faithful and the *Khalifat-ur Rasool*, capable of protecting the two *harams* along with the other Holy Places of Islam and of successfully combating against the intrigues and secret machinations of non-Muslim governments.

That the opinion of the Musalmans alone is the determining factor in this matter was officially acknowledged by Lord Robert Cecil, on behalf of His Majesty's Government on November the 29th, 1917.

Mr. King asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, since the outbreak of War, Russia had any communications with this country relating to the proposals that the Sultan of Turkey should no longer be recognised as Khalifa; if so, what attitude was then assumed on behalf of this country; and whether he will now declare that the Khilafat is a question for Islam alone to decide?

Lord R. Cecil: "The answer to the first part of the Hon. Member's question is in the affirmative, but His Majesty's Government have never departed from the attitude that the question of the Khilafat is one for Moslem opinion alone to decide."

(*Parliamentary Debates, Commons*, vol. XCIX, p. 2192)

We demand that this decision of the Government be put into practice and be not relegated to the domain of pious hopes and broken promises.

Jazirat-ul-Arab

What are the Holy places of Islam? The greatest authority that a Muslim can quote in proof of his contention, next to the Qur'an is that of the *ahadees*. It is reported that the Prophet once said:

Remove the non-Muslims from the Jazirat-ul-Arab. (*Saheeh Bokhari and Saheeh Muslim*)

The same tradition is reported by Hazrat Ibn-i-Abbas in the following words:

The Prophet, may the blessings and peace of God be upon him, had left three things as legacy, one out of which was 'remove the non-Muslims from the Jazirat-ul-Arab'.

The question naturally arises as to what is meant by *Jazirat-ul-Arab*? No explanations could carry greater weight than those given by Arabian scholars and Arabic lexicons.

That which is surrounded by the Indian Ocean and the Sea of Sham (Syria) and also by the Tigris and Euphrates. (*Qamoos*)

Then again it is said that:

Jazirat-ul-Arab extends from Aden to the mountains of Sham in length; and in breadth from Jeddah and the Sea Coast to the agricultural lowlands of Iraq (Mesopotamia). (*Lisan-ul-Arab*).

Further, the reason for its being called the "Island of Arabia" has been explained thus:

All these lands are called *Jazirat-ul-Arab* because they are surrounded by the Sea of Fars (Persian Gulf) and the sea of Abyssinia and the Tigris and the Euphrates. (*Lisan-ul-Arab*)

The injunction, that non-Muslims should not rule over the smallest

portion of the *Jazirat-ul-Arab*, was given because in this portion of the world are situated the cities consecrated by the religion, history and traditions of the Musalmans. In it are buried all the Prophets, *Imams* and divines of Islam and from the midst of its desert started that world-force which has not yet exhausted itself and which, according to the faith of the Musalmans, will endure till the Day of Judgment.

Mecca

In the *Jazirat-ul-Arab* is situated the Holy City of Mecca which contains the *Baitullah*, the first house of God, built by Abraham and reconstructed by the last of the prophets, towards which the Muslims of all climes and countries turn their faces five times a day. It is the birthplace of the Prophet and it was to Mecca that he addressed the words:

O'land of Mecca, I love thee better than any other portion of God's earth and if my people had not driven me out I would never have forsaken thee.

Surrounded by Mina, Arafat and numerous other places, a visit to which is an essential part of the *Hajj*, every inch of Mecca and the land around it is sacred territory, where, never since the days of Abraham, has a bird been shot or a tree felled. For, has not Allah Himself said:

Do they not behold that we have made Mecca a safe sanctuary.

Yasrib, where the Prophet found safety and a home after his migration from the city of his birth, became renowned as the *Madinat-un-Nabi* or "the city of Prophet". God named it *Taiba* (holy) as the Prophet once said:

God has named it the holy city. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

Medina was raised to the high dignity of a *haram* (sanctuary) by the Prophet who said:

Abraham made Mecca a *haram* and I declare Medina to be one. (*Saheeh Muslim*)

It is of this city that the Prophet declared:

He who comes with the intention of seeing me will be near me on the Day of Judgement; I shall be his witness and intercede on his behalf on the Day of Judgement who adopts Medina as his home and bears its hardships with patience; while he who dies within the holy precincts of Mecca or Medina will be immune from punishment on the Day of Judgement (*Mishat Baihaqi*)

A major portion of the Divine Book was revealed in Medina and from here were issued the orders and instructions which gave final shape and form to the constitution and organization of the Islamic theocracy. Medina again was the centre from which radiated the resplendent rays of the Light of Islam and it was here that the mortal remains of the Prophet were entrusted to the earth.

Mecca with its *Baitullah* and Medina with its *Rauza-t-athar* are together called the *Harmain-ish-Sharifain* and in the words of the Holy Qur'an :

Those who join others with God are unclean, so let them not come near the Sacred Mosque after this year.

Non-Muslims are forbidden to enter them.

Jerusalem and Palestine

Bait-ul-Maqdis, "city of the Holy House", is also held sacred by the Muslim. This was the city towards which, not only all the prophets of *Beni Israel* turned their faces in prayers, but it was also the *qibla* of the prophet of Islam and his followers for full 14 years. After the *Kaaba*, the *Masjid-il-Aqsa* of Jerusalem is the first house of God of Islam. It has been referred to in the Qur'an in connection with the *Mi'raj* where it is said:

Glory be to Him Who took His servant a journey by night from *Masjid-il-Haram* to *Masjid-il-Aqsa* whose precincts we have blessed.

Allah ordered Moses to remove his shoes in its vicinity in the words:

Thou are in the holy valley Tuwa,

Just as President Wilson would refuse to hand over the Government of the United States to the head of some forgotten Red Indian tribe or just as the Whites in the European colonies would decline to withdraw in favour of the native aborigines or even just as we ourselves would oppose a revival of the Bhil and Gond Empire in India, Palestine cannot be handed over to the Zionists, whose sole claim to that land is that centuries before the birth of Christ the ancestors of the wandering sons of Israel had once lived in it. The achievements of Salahuddin Ayyubi and the blood of millions of *mujahideen* did not flow, in the days of the Crusades, to lose it to a people who cannot put forward any recognisable claim to it. The Muslim rulers of Palestine have, as acknowledged by Christians and Jews themselves, always kept the door open to all. It has given no amount of pain and much resentment has been created, among the Muslims of India, to see that the attitude of their own Government, in connection with this matter, has been diametrically opposed to their wishes and sentiments.

Mr. King asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (on 19th November, 1917) whether the desire of the Government to see established a Jewish Zionist nationality in Palestine has been communicated to the Allied Powers, especially to France, Russia, Italy, and the other Allied States, and whether it is one of the Allied war aims or only a British war aim, to set a Zion community in the Holy Land?

Mr. Balfour: "No official communication has been made to the Allies on the subject, but His Majesty's Government believes that the declaration referred to would meet with their approval. His Majesty's Government hopes that the establishment in Palestine of a national home of the Jewish people will result from the present war."

(*Parliamentary Debates, Commons*, vol. XCIX, p., 838)

This decision on the part of the Cabinet was served out to us here, in India, by Reuter and the Official Censor with the following addition:

(His Majesty's Government) will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being understood that nothing will be done to prejudice the civil and religious rights of



**Mr. Mohammed Ali, Organiser and Dr. M.A. Ansari,
Director of the Medical Mission to Constantinople.**

the non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status of the Jews in any other country.

Najaf and Karbala

Najaf-i-Ashraf contains the sacred remains of Ali, the Lion of Allah and Khalifa of Islam. He is regared as the fountain-head of the different schools of spiritualism by the sufis.

In Karbala-i-Maulla is buried the great martyr of Islam, Husain-ibn-i-Ali, who gave his life to uphold right against wrong.

Baghdad

Baghdad with is its mausoleum of Shaikh Abdul Qadir Jilani is the centre of the Qadiria school of sufis which claims millions of votaries among the Musalmans all the world over. The remains of Maroof-i-Kakhi, Ibn-i-Jauzi, Imam Ghazzali and that greatest of Muslim jurists, Imam Abu Hanifa, endear the city of Baghdad to the heart of every Muslim.

His Majesty's Declaration

The Government of India published, on behalf of His Majesty's Government and on behalf of the Governments of France and Russia, a declaration on the 2nd November, 1914, which says:

In view of the outbreak of war between Great Britain and Turkey, which to the regret of Great Britain has been brought about by the ill-advised, unprovoked and deliberate action of the Ottoman Government, His Excellency the Viceroy is authorised by his Majesty's Government to make the following public announcement in regard to the Holy shrines of Mesopotamia and the port of Jedda, in order that there may be no misunderstanding on the part of His Majesty's most loyal Muslim subjects as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government in this war in which no question of a religious character is involved. These Holy Places and Jedda will be immune from attack or molestation by the British naval and military forces so long as there is no interference with pilgrims from India to the Holy Places and shrines in question. At the request of His Majesty's Government, the Governments of France and Russia have given them similar assurances.

I leave it to you, gentlemen, to judge how far even this most carefully worked proclamation, has been carried into effect.

Muslim States

Essential though they are to the Musalmans, these are not the only questions they desire to see settled to their satisfaction. There is another question of vital importance to the peaceful evolution of the human race which awaits our immediate and careful attention. This war, gentlemen, has demonstrated, if any demonstration were needed, the instability of the present order of the world. It was the logical outcome of the policy of selfish aggrandisement and exclusive national ambitions pursued by the nations of the West who placed their national interests above the liberty and freedom of other nations. This general holocaust of the best and the choicest of the human race would have taken place for nothing if we did not realize this fact and reconstruct the world on principles which would for ever preclude any chance of the domination of one portion of humanity by another and would give equal and fair chance to all nations to contribute to the efforts of MAN to realize himself.

I have already reviewed the painful history of the fate of Muslim peoples before you. As men and as Musalmans we cannot be indifferent to the fate of 40 millions of our co-religionists in the world. We are deeply interested in their future and demand that not only integrity and independence of the present Muslim States be maintained intact but the wrong done to the Arabs of North Africa and the Tartars and Turks of Central Asia be redressed and all these peoples be given a free chance of determining their own form of government. In this connection, gentlemen, I feel it my bounden duty to offer on your behalf and mine, our grateful thanks to that acknowledged intrepid leader of India Mr. M.K. Gandhi, who is never afraid to speak out the truth and who has, by his noble actions, endeared himself, as much to the Musalmans as to the Hindus. In his famous letter, of the 29th April, 1918, addressed to His Excellency the Viceroy, he has laid down the correct definition of Indian Nationalism and explained the attitude that should be adopted by Indian politicians towards Muslim sentiments.¹

¹See *Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 14, p. 377-83.

Muslims of India

Looking back to the last four years of war through which we have passed, one can only characterise this period, so far as the relations of the officials and the Musalmans are concerned, as one varying from bias against them to that of antipathy, suspicion, mistrust and even dislike. The apparent cause of this attitude seems to be the entry of Turkey in this war against England and her Allies. In this choice of the Turks the Musalmans of India had no hand. Indeed, it can be authoritatively stated to the contrary that what little influence they possessed in this matter was used to dissuade the Turks from pursuing the course which they did. Neither did the Musalmans fail in their duty to urge their own Government to adopt a policy of reconciliation and not coerce the Turks to join its enemies. Our sympathies for the Turks are well-known and patent. The Musalmans, however, exercised admirable self-control over their feelings and, in spite of innumerable provocations, proved successful under the severest tests. As if the anxieties and agonies of the war were not sufficient, nearer home, in India we were being subjected to a treatment which no self-respecting people would have tolerated. Had it not been that our rulers were engaged in a struggle of life and death the Musalmans would have taken such constitutional measures as would have compelled attention.

Muslim Internment

Eminent Muslim divines and acknowledged political leaders have been deprived of their freedom and liberty on the flimsiest pretexts. Those of us who have been fortunate enough to receive the attentions of the all-powerful C.I.D. know full well how its secret machinery works. No wonder if the authors of the *Arabian Nights*, *Tilism-i-Hoshruoa* and *Qissa-i-Hatim-Tai* jump out of their graves to pay homage to the great masters of the C.I.D. for their creative imaginations and inventive faculties. To give to their fabrications the sorely needed touches of reality and truth it has now become common practice to appoint official commissions and committees of inquiry which invariably put their seal of approbation and finality on them. While the Musalmaas are keenly feeling the absence of men like Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Mr. Shaukat Ali, and his brilliant brother, Mr. Mohammad Ali, and a host of others, a greater tragedy has been and is being enacted in the marshy and malarial lowlands of Bengal, where

the youth and intellect of that unhappy province has been imprisoned and put in shackles.

Muslim Press

Gentlemen, you are all aware of the methods adopted by the bureaucracy to strangle the Muslim Press and to destroy the organs of Muslim public opinion, one by one, so much so that in the whole of India not a single free Muslim newspaper exists today. Our voice has been silenced and we have been prevented from carrying our views to the public, the Government and the British democracy. Where the omnivorous Press Act could not catch its prey, the Defence of India Act was brought to assist it in devouring one after another, the *Zamindar*, the *Muslim Gazette*, the *Comrade*, the *Humdard*, the *Tauheed*, the *Tarjuman*, the *Sadakat*, *Al-Hilal*, *Al-Balagh*, the *New Era*, the *Jamhoor*, and many others.

Muslim Meetings

The lack of sympathy for Muslim views and grievances has been further evidenced by the repressive policy adopted in the stopping of a meeting in Calcutta in September last.¹ The objects of this meeting were not only perfectly lawful but involved a question vitally connected with the religious sentiments of the Musalmans, who were justified in their wish to give expression to their natural resentment at the insulting and vile references made to the Holy Prophet's tomb. The action of the Bengal Government in this matter was highly unjust, partial and one-sided and the responsibility for the loss of life and property rests entirely on its shoulders.

Gentlemen, you will thus observe that the two avenues of ventilating their grievances, a free press and the right of association, have been closed to them.

Separate Muslim Representation

As a further evidence of the changed "angle of vision" on the part of the Government to the detriment of the rights of our community, I

¹For details, see J.H. Broomfield, "The Forgotten Majority: The Bengal Muslims and September 1918", in D.A. Low (ed.), *Soundings in Modern South Asian History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1968).

would refer you to the adverse and unfavourable remarks made by Mr. Montagu and Lord Chelmsford on the question of separate electorates and communal representation,¹ which is the life and soul of all our political activities of the present day. In view of the solemn pledges given to us by the Government and in view of the understanding arrived at between our Hindu brethren and ourselves and in our own interests, we cannot "release" the Government of its pledges and promises. The absence of any representative of the Musalmans of India from the deliberations of the Imperial Conference has added to this feeling of neglect which has been further intensified by their non-representation at the War Cabinet and still more at the Peace Conference, where questions affecting the very existence of the Musalmans are to form subjects of discussion. No non-Muslim, however sympathetic or friendly he may be, can claim to speak on Muslim questions with authority nor can he put the Muslim case in so forcible and convincing a manner as would be expected from a Musalman.

Religious Liberty

Finally, there is a growing feeling among the Musalmans that attempts have been made to interfere with the religious liberty guaranteed to them under the Proclamation of 1858, which is the fundamental basis of their allegiance to the Crown. The indirect influence brought to bear upon the managers of mosques to remove the name of the Khalifat-ur-Rasool from the the Friday prayers and the peregrinations of certain persons in search of signatures on the *fatwa* purporting to declare the rebel Shareef of Mecca as the future Khalifa of the Musalmans, are matters which cannot be ignored. The continuance of the cruel and unjust incarceration of Mr. Shaukat Ali and his brother Mr. Mohammad Ali because they prefixed a few important sentences, regarding their allegiance to God and their adherence to the faith of Islam, to the undertaking sent them by the Director of the Criminal Intelligence Department, gives an added credence to this feeling. It is our duty, as law-abiding citizens, to beg the Government not to allow this feeling to take root in the minds of the people.

¹The *Report on Indian Constitutional Reforms* condemned communal representation on the grounds that it perpetuated class distinctions, stereotyped existing relations and constituted 'a very serious hindrance to the development of the self-governing principle'.

Hindu-Muslim Unity

So far, Gentlemen, I have discussed topics which affected the Musalmans alone. But that does not mean that I am not keenly interested in the problems of our motherland. I have heard it said that the extra-territorial patriotism of the Indian Musalman is opposed to Indian Nationalism and that he would be prepared "to sacrifice the whole of India for an inch of land in Gallipoli". This is a travesty of truth not sanctioned by facts. The Musalmans have fought the battle of India shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brethren, their political programme has come in line with that of the Hindus, the Hindu-Muslim *rapprochement* entered into at Lucknow has, year after year, gained strength and vitality and I believe that as time goes on we shall understand each other better and any causes of friction that remain shall cease to exist. It is my firm conviction that a true Musalman is always a good Nationalist. If we sympathise with the Musalmans of Turkey and Persia, we have also proved that we are second to none in our sincere advocacy of the rights of our countrymen in foreign lands and it was left to an Indian Musalman Ahmad Muhammad Kachalia to fight the battles of India in South Africa and fill the place vacated by that dauntless champion of our rights, Mr. Gandhi. But while anxious to fight for the common rights of the two communities, the Musalman is determined to maintain his position in this country and will jealously guard all his legitimate rights. It has pained me beyond expression to read the harrowing details of the barbarous treatment meted out by the Hindus of Kartarpur to the unoffending and innocent Musalmans of that place. It is impossible to put into words the feelings of indignation and anger that are present in the hearts of every one of us here. Incidents like these embitter the relations between the two communities and strike at the very root of the *entente cordiale*. I appeal to my Hindu brethren to take effective measures to prevent any recurrence of such deplorable incidents. It is necessary for the Musalmans to co-operate with the Hindus to realise their political ideals, the Hindus too cannot fulfil their national destiny by excluding the Musalmans. *Accommodation not retaliation*, should be the motto of both of us.

Self-Determination

It would be impossible to conclude my remarks without clearly putting before you the situation which this world war has created. Out of

the welter and blood of the Armageddon have emerged certain definite principles on which will be based the foundations of a new and better world.

These principles were enunciated by the President of the American Republic and accepted by the statesmen of the leading nations of the world. They have been repeated, explained and amplified, time after time, until no doubt has been left in the minds of men that their application will be universal and not confined to the geographical limits of a country or continent, nor will they be circumscribed by the prejudices of race, colour or creed. To my mind there is but one single doctrine in which is focused the entire thought of the whole human race. This doctrine, Gentlemen, is the doctrine of SELF-DETERMINATION. If every nation, small or large, weak or strong, free or under subjugation is given the chance to realise itself and to determine its own destiny, without any outside intervention, it will develop its own form of Government, its own national culture and its own peculiar civilization. It is only on such lines that free nationalities could expand and develop and it is only under such conditions that the world could be made fit to live in. The phrase "subject nationality" would then be obsolete and there would be no such thing as national greed or aggression. The world would then consist of a sisterhood of free and trusting states, each helping the other for the common good of mankind.

It was to facilitate the establishment of this happy order that India contributed so lavishly in men and money and in the final reconstruction of the world she cannot be left out. The blood of her sons has not flown on the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa to win freedom and liberty for other nations and perpetuate her own bondage. The tradition and history of the Hindus and Musalmans support her claims to recognition. The Hindus possessed a civilization which preceded even those of Greece and Rome and long before the modern Western world had emerged out of its darkness she possessed democratic institutions in her village *panchayats*. Her guilds of artisans and traders and the constitutional limits placed on the powers exercised by her rulers, as we find them described in her ancient books, leave no doubt in our mind that she had attained, at that early period of the world's history, a standard of liberty which would entitle her to be recognised as a leader of democracy in our own day.

Democracy is the very essence and life-breath of Islam. The world cannot show a spectacle of such absolute equality and fraternity as the assemblage in the plains of Arafat, during the *Hajj*, of millions of Musalmans dressed in white unsewn garb with shaved heads and bare

feet obliterating all distinctions between the rich and poor, the king and the subject, the master and the slave. Can the world preach equality in a clearer and more effective manner than when Allah made His Messenger declare:

Say, I too am a human being like unto you.

Apart from this perfect equality in matters of religion, the same spirit permeates all the social and political institutions of Islam. Students of history are fully aware how, in the reign of that greatest of Muslim Khalifas, Umar-ibn-ul-Khattab, the poorest of Musalmans criticised, most freely and fearlessly, the actions of the Khalifa. How on one occasion when Umar asked his hearers at a congregation as to what they would do if he did not rule them according to the law of the *Shariat*, a wild bedouin, imbued with the true spirit of Islam, unsheathing his sabre retorted, that he would bring the Khalifa to the right path at the point of the sword. This is not an isolated instance. Muslim history abounds in them. The vicissitudes of time might have somewhat suppressed the latent instincts inherent in the two great peoples inhabiting India, but given full opportunities of development, they are bound to regain their former splendour and greatness.

If Ireland, in spite of her hostile attitude even during the war, can bring forward her interesting doctrine of "suppressed sovereignty" and compel English ministers to grant her Home Rule, if England and her Allies can champion the cause of Poland, the Czecho-Slavs and the patched up and degenerate nationalities of the Balkans, if it is proposed to breathe new political life into the dead remains of the Armenian kingdom and if the scattered sons of Israel are to be once more gathered into the folds of Judia, equity and Justice, political honesty and loyalty to the principles, accepted and preached by the statesmen of Europe and America, demand that India shall not be deprived of her innate right to determine her future and control her destinies.

If the claims of India are not satisfied, from the point of view of the Indians, the Great War shall have been fought in vain.

APPENDIX B

Presidential Address at the Indian National Congress Session, Madras, 1927.

Fellow-delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I find it difficult to put into words my deep sense of gratitude at the confidence you have placed in me by calling upon me to preside over the deliberations of the Indian National Congress at this critical juncture in the history of our struggle for freedom. This meeting of the Congress at Madras takes me back to the day more than a quarter of a century ago when, as an under-graduate, full of hope and enthusiasm, I had my first glimpse of our great national gathering. Little did I dream then that in that very city it would fall to my lot to occupy the Chair which has been filled in the past by some of the greatest sons of India. Our national movement has increased in force and volume since those days. The political awakening of the people has become widespread, the intensity of the struggle has become more severe and, with the march of time, the problems we are called upon to solve grown more and more complex. The task of your President has, in consequence, become delicate and difficult. It was only the hope that I could count upon your indulgence towards my shortcomings and your generous support in the discharge of my duties that encouraged me to undertake this heavy responsibility.

The inter-dependence of political problems in different countries and the dangers arising out of the economic and political bondage of India to the peaceful progress of humanity at large, specially to the interests of the workers in Great Britain, are being gradually realised and while Imperialist and Capitalist interests are carrying on an organised campaign of misrepresentation and vilification against India in order to justify and perpetuate its exploitation and subservience, the presence, among us today, of the distinguished fraternal delegates from across the seas, gives hope that fellow victims of Imperialism and Capitalism in other parts of the world have begun to appreciate the necessity of closer cooperation and joint action to fight the common enemy. I offer these friends a sincere and cordial welcome on behalf of the Indian National Congress and the people of India.

A matter of greater pleasure and satisfaction to me is that my appeal for a reunited Congress has met with such a generous response. I rejoice to find among us once more veterans and tried champions

whose names are inseparably associated with India's fight for freedom. I cordially welcome all these comrades and fellow-workers back to the fold of the Congress and hope and pray that, as in the past so in the future, the country will derive the fullest benefit from their services.

India and Imperialism

In the statement I published some time back I had touched upon the salient features of the existing political situation and briefly expressed my own views regarding the most effective method of dealing with it. I do not, therefore, propose to address you at great length today. But even in a brief survey we must take into account every issue that has direct bearing on the furtherance of our political programme. All schools of political thought in India are agreed that the goal of our activities is a free and self-governing India, offering equal opportunities to all and recognising and guaranteeing the just and legitimate rights of all sections and classes, at peace within herself and friendly with the rest of the world. Indians do not claim anything more or less than that they shall occupy the same position and enjoy the same rights in their country as free people do in their own. If this can be achieved within the Empire, they have no desire to break away from it but if the Imperial connection stands in the way of our reaching the goal, we should not hesitate to sever that connection. Our motto, in the words of Mahatma Gandhi, should be "within the Empire if possible, without if necessary".

I do not minimise the difficulties in our path. They are many but none so formidable as the one arising out of the aggressiveness of Imperialism and the greed of High Finance, the two most fruitful sources of trouble and misery in the world today. Empires are carved and nations are deprived of their liberties to satisfy the Imperialist ambition and to monopolise resources in raw materials to feed the factories in Europe and to secure exclusive markets for their output.

Politicians and statesmen wax eloquent over the "*mission civilisatrice*" and the "white man's burden", but none has exposed the hollowness of these professions better than Cecil Rhodes, the great pioneer of Imperialism in South Africa, when he said: "Pure philanthropy is very well in its way but philanthropy plus five per cent is a good deal better." Joseph Chamberlain, that High Priest of Imperialism, was more outspoken. "The Empire", he said, "is commerce", and India, he was frank enough to add, is "by far the greatest and the

most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have". The history of this philanthropic burglary on the part of Europe is written in blood and suffering from Congo to Canton. The steel frame theory of Government, the arrogant claims to trusteeship of dumb millions and the newly invented illusion to cloak the pre-war Concert of Europe, known as the League of Nations, are but different manifestations of the same spirit. So long as these dangerous doctrines are pursued, the sources of human misery shall endure. India holds in her hands the remedy for this universal misfortune, for she is the key-stone of the arch of Imperialism. Once India is free the whole edifice will collapse. The best guarantee for the freedom of Asia and the peace of the world, is a free and self-governing India.

Congress Policies

The problem then is how to free India. For over a generation the leaders of public opinion in the country advocated and practised a policy of complete cooperation with the Government. That policy was doomed to failure from its very inception. Cooperation is possible between groups with common ideals. Where objects pursued are diametrically opposed there can be no cooperation. Cooperation in such circumstances can only mean surrender of the most cherished ideals on the part of the weak to the wishes and desires of the strong. The difference between the ideals of two nations is nowhere brought out more vividly or in greater relief than in the report of the late Mr. Montagu, a Liberal Secretary of State for India, noted for his pro-Indian sympathies. The report, which forms the basis of the Government of India Act of 1919 while promising progressive realisation of responsible government and extending lavish hopes for the future, clearly lays down:

It seems to us axiomatic that there cannot be a completely representative and responsible Government of India on an equal footing with the other self-governing units of the British Commonwealth until the component States whose people it represents and to whom it is responsible, or at least the great majority of them, have themselves reached the stage of full responsible government. Nor even then can we say that the form or the degree of responsibility which will be reached in India will exactly correspond to that attained by the Dominions. The final form of India's constitution must be evolved out of the conditions of India, and

must be materially affected by the need for securing Imperial responsibilities.

If, however, our rulers forsake their divine mission of civilising "the inferior races" and cease to act as the executors of the decrees of Providence, if they realise that a friendly and free India will be a better customer than a sullen and hostile dependency kept under political and economic bondage, in short, if they recognise that there are civilisations and cultures equally good, if not better than their own, if they cease to think in terms of the ruler and the ruled and are prepared to meet us on terms of equality, it will then be time for us to revise our views on cooperation.

An alternative policy advocated, on the setback received by the Non-Cooperation Movement, was to capture the Councils and, by creating constitutional deadlocks, force the Government to yield to the wishes of the people. The advocates of this policy, however, failed to give its proper weight to the fact that the limitations imposed by the Government of India Act of 1919, rendered all such opposition ineffective and the creation of constitutional deadlocks a practical impossibility. They, no less than the advocates of the policy of cooperation, should have realised that an ultra-constitutional issue could not be fought on a strictly constitutional plain. In a trial of strength there can be no hope of success if your opponent is also the referee. Practical experience has demonstrated the futility of such a policy even in Provinces where the believers in this method commanded a majority. They undoubtedly succeeded in exposing the hollowness of the so-called Reforms and by preventing the Government from packing legislatures with "safe" persons they made it impossible for the rulers to present their autocratic and high handed actions as representing the declared will of the people expressed through its chosen representatives. But all this has not materially advanced our cause nor has it brought us any nearer our goal, while the price paid for it is too dear. It has diverted the energies of some of our ablest men from problems of real national importance. The Council programme, adopted at a time of depression, was professedly in the nature of an experiment. We gave it a trial and if it has not fulfilled our expectations there is no reason to feel discouraged or disappointed. Let us revise our policy in the light of our past experience.

There are no two opinions regarding our goal. We all desire to see India free and self-governing. For the achievement of our object we are not wedded to any particular policy, nor do we consider

any programme sacrosanct or binding for ever. We have to judge a policy or a programme by its suitability to our peculiar social and political conditions, by its practicability and by the results which it is likely to give within a measurable period of time. We have now before us the results of the three experiments made by the Congress during the last forty years. We gave an unbroken period of thirty-five years to cooperation, about a year and a half to Non-cooperation and four years to the policy of obstruction within the Councils and constitutional deadlocks. We can, at this stage, appraise the real value of each programme and judge the comparative merits and demerits of each. Cooperation has led as nowhere. Obstruction within the Councils has not given us any better results. Non-cooperation certainly did not achieve all that was expected of it through our own weakness and inability to rise to the high level demanded by it and not through any inherent defect of that policy. Non-cooperation did not fail us, we failed Non-cooperation. We did receive an unquestionable and a serious setback in the first encounter. I also admit that in the present atmosphere of mutual suspicion and hatred created by deplorable communal quarrels and with the whole country divided into hostile political camps and factious groups, there is no prospect of an immediate resumption of Non-cooperation. The spirit of Non-cooperation, however, has come to stay as a potent force in Indian politics and as I have said elsewhere:

I feel as certain as ever that apart from very extraordinary and unexpected occurrence we shall win back our freedom only by self-discipline, self-organisation and self-help and through a movement in which we would be obliged to resort to direct action in some shape or form. I firmly believe that India is only recuperating from the moral and material effects of a disastrous war and would soon emerge once more resuscitated and rejuvenated to attain what it is destined to attain.

How best then can we help this process of resuscitation and rejuvenation and prepare ourselves for the next encounter? It is my unshakable belief that this cannot be done unless we have established unity in the country, unity in the Congress, and unity in the Councils, if people must still make use of them. Differences of opinion are inevitable. They have existed and will continue to exist. What we have to learn is the stage at which these differences, if persisted in, become injurious to the general interest of the country. We must learn to

differentiate between personal prestige and public weal and to sacrifice individual gains to the collective good.

Hindu-Muslim Relations

There is no feature of the Indian political situation more disquieting than the shameful quarrels between Hindus and Musalmans. No language can be too strong to condemn the murderous assaults and callous destruction of life and property in the riotings which occur with such painful frequency. Hardly a day passes when we do not hear of some violent outburst of communal fury in one part of the country or the other, leaving its legacy of bitterness and hatred and threatening to reduce the country to one vast camp of warring communal factions bent on destroying each other. It is due to this that the Congress itself has lost its popularity. It is being relegated in many Provinces to a secondary position, and preference is being given to communal organisations, specially those which are militant. This state of affairs must not be allowed to continue longer. The problem of Hindu-Muslim differences must be solved once and for all and there is no organisation more competent and better fitted to put an end to it than the Indian National Congress.

While attempting to solve the Hindu-Muslim question we should not, however, mistake the symptom for the disease. The political and religious differences which are straining the relations between the two communities are but outward manifestations of a deeper conflict, not peculiar to India or unknown to history. It is essentially a problem of two different cultures, each with its own outlook on life, coming in close contact with one another. The best remedy lies in a recognition of the right of each culture to exist, in a development of a spirit of tolerance and respect and in the encouragement and cultivation of cultural affinity by the establishment of national institutions where young people of both the communities will come into touch with each other and get opportunities to study and understand the ideals underlying the civilisations of both. The educated Indian is forced by circumstances to study European culture but knows next to nothing about the culture of his fellow countrymen living next door. It is time this dangerous isolation and colossal ignorance were ended. With greater knowledge of each other's deep-rooted sentiments and sympathy for each other's ideals, questions of separate representation, cow-slaughter and music before mosques will become matters of the past, of interest only to research scholars of Indian History.

In the meantime, we cannot afford to minimise or neglect the problem which faces us today. There are certain fundamental facts which it will be well for Hindus and Musalmans to remember. They should not forget that they are Indians destined to live in India and die in India. Providence has bound their fates together indissolubly. If there be any Hindu brother of mine who imagines that he can get rid of seventy millions of his Muslim fellow-countrymen he is labouring under a great delusion and the sooner he is disillusioned the better for him and the country. Similarly, if any Muslim brother of mine is dreaming of lording it over two hundred and fifty millions of his Hindu countrymen, he is living in a fool's paradise and the sooner he opens his eyes the better for the Muslim community and India. The Swaraj we are striving for will be neither Hindu Raj nor Muslim Raj. It will be a Joint Raj protecting the just and legitimate rights and privileges of all. Perpetual warfare cannot be the normal state of human society. The worker in the communal cause apparently wishes to improve the economic, political and educational position of his community. With this I have no quarrel. But for any solid and lasting good to be done either to a group or to a nation, tranquillity and peace are essential conditions. Violent communal outbursts may benefit any other party, they certainly cannot benefit the country nor do they serve any exclusive communal interests. Instead of resorting to these barbarous methods of settling differences, I would appeal to my countrymen, to make use of the great national tribunal, the custodian of the rights and privileges of all sections and communities inhabiting this country, the Indian National Congress, for the protection of their rights and the redress of their grievances.

A subject people trying to shake off foreign domination cannot afford to carry on any internecine struggle. We cannot in one breath talk of freedom and communalism, for they are the very antithesis of each other. It would be difficult for an outside observer to believe in the genuineness of our demand when he observes the fratricidal war we are waging today. Our very patriotism begins to appear a sham. In our efforts to gain a little advantage here and a little advantage there over our rivals, we are unconsciously playing into the hands of the common adversary whose position is being strengthened every day. Can we not all with one joint effort and determination get rid of this degrading mentality? Self-respect, even self-interest, requires us to enlarge our vision and look beyond momentary and sectional advantage to the lasting national gain.

Hindu-Muslim Differences

The causes of communal antagonism exercising the minds of the leaders of the two communities as brought out at the various Unity Conferences crystallise themselves into two distinct groups: Political and Religious.

Political

It will serve no useful purpose to enter into a description of how the Musalmans, fearing that the sense of political responsibility of the majority was not sufficiently advanced to trust it with the protection of their rights, demanded separate representation and separate electorates. It is a matter of past history and every one in this assembly is fully aware of it. It is enough for our present purpose to state that, realising the disastrous consequences recent developments were likely to lead to, the Indian National Congress, at its annual session last year at Gauhati, called upon the All India Congress Committee to devise measures for a settlement of the trouble in these terms:

The Congress calls upon the Working Committee to take immediate steps in consultation with the Hindu and Musalman leaders to devise measures for the present deplorable disturbances between Hindus and Musalmans and submit a report to the All India Congress Committee, not later than the 31st March, 1927. This Congress authorises the All India Congress Committee to issue the necessary instructions on their behalf to all Congressmen in the country and take such other steps as it may deem fit after consideration of the said report.

The President got in touch with the leaders of public opinion in both the communities. He travelled extensively all over the country to mobilise the good sense and active cooperation of both communities and, finally, arranged a series of conversations at Delhi. It is a great tribute to the sincerity, zeal and indefatigable energy of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, that a formula for settlement of outstanding political differences was at last discovered. I would be lacking in my duty if I did not place on record the appreciation of the Indian National Congress of the spirit of patriotism and statesmanship displayed by the Muslim leaders who rose above prejudice, suspicion and narrow communal outlook and boldly came forward with the proposals which

presage a new orientation of Muslim policy in India. The Working Committee, at a meeting held on the 15th May, "considered the proposals made by representative Muslim leaders who met in Delhi, on the 20th March last, as well as the opinion of the Hindu Mahasabha and other Hindu organisations and the opinions of other leaders and representatives of both communities," and submitted its report to the All India Congress Committee on the 16th May, 1927. The resolution, embodying the recommendations of the Working Committee passed by the All India Congress Committee, with unanimous support of all the members present, including some of the foremost leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha, speaks volumes for the political sagacity of the Committee and was a personal triumph for the President and his great powers of persuasion.

The All India Congress Committee approves and adopts the report of the Working Committee on the Hindu-Muslim question and the recommendations contained therein and calls upon all Congress organisations to take necessary steps to have the following recommendations carried out:

1. That in any future scheme of constitution, so far as representation to the various legislatures is concerned, joint electorates in all the provinces and in the Central Legislature be constituted.

2. That, with a view to give full assurance to the two great communities that their legitimate interests will be safeguarded in the Legislatures for the present, and if desired, such representation of the communities should be secured by the reservation of seats in joint electorates on the basis of population in every province and in the Central Legislature;

Provided that reciprocal concessions in favour of minorities including the Sikhs in the Punjab may be made by mutual agreement so as to give them representation in excess of the proportion of the number of seats to which they would be entitled on the population basis in any province or provinces, and the proportions so agreed upon for the provinces shall be maintained in the representation of the two communities in the Central Legislature from the provinces.

3. (a) That the proposal made by the Muslim leaders that reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and British Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces is, in the opinion of

the Committee, a fair and reasonable one, and should be given effect to, care being taken that simultaneously with other measures of administrative reform an adequate system of judicial administration shall be introduced in the said provinces.

4. (i) That with regard to the proposal that Sind should be constituted into a separate province, this Committee is of opinion that the time has come for the redistribution of provinces on linguistic basis—a principle that has been adopted by the constitution of the Congress.

(ii) The Committee is also of opinion that such readjustment of provinces be immediately taken in hand and any province which demands such reconstitution on a linguistic basis be dealt with accordingly.

(iii) The Committee is further of opinion that a beginning may be made by constituting Andhra, Sind and Karnatak into separate provinces.

4. That, in the future Constitution, liberty of conscience shall be guaranteed and no legislature, central or provincial, shall have power to make any laws interfering with liberty of conscience.

Liberty of "Conscience" means liberty of belief and worship, freedom of religious observances and association, and freedom to carry on religious education and propaganda with due regard to the feelings of others and without interfering with similar rights of others.

5. That no Bill, Resolution, Motion or Amendment regarding inter-communal matters shall be moved, discussed or passed in any legislature, Central or Provincial, if a three-fourth majority of the members of either community affected thereby in that legislature oppose the introduction, discussion or passing of Bill, Resolution, Motion or Amendment.

Inter-communal matters means matters agreed upon as such by a Joint Standing Committee of both communities, of the Hindu and Muslim members of the legislatures concerned, appointed at the commencement of every session of the legislature.

This resolution is a great advance on the Lucknow Pact of 1916, which has so far regulated Hindu-Muslim relations. Its terms are so clear that there is no need of any further comment from me. I should, however, like to emphasise the importance of the decision regarding joint electorates. The one great cause of friction so far has been separate electorates. If the success of a candidate at elections depends entirely on the votes of his co-religionists the tendency to exaggerate and accentuate points of communal friction and division in order to catch votes is inevitable. The resolution, while making the fullest possible allowance for the fear of minorities regarding adequate protection, by reservation of seats, presents fresh opportunities for the development of a spirit of friendliness and mutual confidence, the best augury of a United India.

The acceptance of the principle of representation on the basis of population puts our electoral system on a just and equitable basis. It puts an end, on the one hand, to the dissatisfaction felt at the preferential treatment accorded to minorities and, on the other, removes the grievance of the majorities in Bengal and the Punjab which were reduced to minorities. At the same time, the special interests of minorities have been safeguarded by the provision that if three-fourths majority of their representatives opposes any measure affecting their interests it shall not be even discussed or moved.

The right of the Indian National Congress to settle communal differences has been challenged in certain quarters. It has been contended that the Congress has no jurisdiction in inter-communal matters, whether political or religious. I hold that no communal organisation or organisations put together, can supersede the Congress or enjoy even a parallel jurisdiction. The Indian National Congress is not meant for registering the decrees issued by the different communal organisations. It is primarily and essentially the only organisation that can deal with such matters and hold the balance even between community and community. If leaders of communal groups can come to a just and amicable agreement on any questions agitating the minds of their respective communities the Congress would unhesitatingly welcome it. But if they fail to arrive at an agreement the Congress, as the paramount national organisation, must step in and perform its obvious duty of adjusting communal relations and preserving communal peace and harmony undeterred by petulant threats and challenges from angry and disgruntled communalists.

Religious

So far as political differences are concerned the Congress adopted a satisfactory formula for their solution at Bombay. But religious and social points of difference still remained to be settled and the President gave the leaders of the two communities an opportunity at Simla to come to an agreement on them. When the protracted negotiations ended in a fiasco the President took advantage of the meeting of the All India Congress Committee to be held at Calcutta and issued invitations to prominent Hindu and Muslim leaders to give the Committee the benefit of their advice and help him and the Committee to complete the good work begun at Bombay. The result of these efforts is summed up in the two resolutions passed at the Unity Conference and adopted by the All India Congress Committee:

1. *Conversion*.—The All India Congress Committee resolves that every individual or group is at liberty to convert or reconvert another by argument or persuasion but no individual or group shall attempt to do so, or prevent its being done, by force, fraud or other unfair means such as the offering of material inducement. Persons under eighteen years of age should not be converted unless it be along with their parents or guardians. If any person under eighteen years of age is found stranded without his parents or guardian by persons of another faith, he should be promptly handed over to persons of his own faith. There must be no secrecy as to the persons, place, time or manner about any conversion or reconversion, nor should there be any demonstration or jubilation in support of any conversion or reconversion.

Whenever any complaint is made in respect of any conversion or reconversion, that it was effected in secrecy or by force, fraud or other unfair means, or whenever any person under eighteen years of age is converted, the matter shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators who shall be appointed by the Working Committee either by name or under general regulations.

2. *Cow and Music*.—The All India Congress Committee, while approving of the following resolution on the Cow and Music question as a fair settlement of opposite demands and points of view, authorises members of the Congress to carry on propaganda among Hindus and Muslims along the lines indicated in the resolution and calls upon the Working Committee to appoint a Sub-Committee for the purpose

of carrying on such propaganda.

And further resolves that the resolution comes up for confirmation at the meeting of the All India Congress Committee and the Congress to be held in Madras.

Whereas no community in India should impose or seek to impose its religious obligations or religious views upon any other community but the free profession and practice of religion should be subject to public order and morality, be guaranteed to every community and person.

Hindus are at liberty to take processions and play music before any mosque at any time for religious or other purposes but there should be no stoppage of the processions nor special demonstrations in front of a mosque nor shall the song or music sung or played in front of a mosque be such as is calculated to cause annoyance or special disturbance to the worshippers in the mosque.

Muslims are at liberty to sacrifice cows or, subject to existing municipal laws regulating the slaughter of animals for purposes of food, to slaughter cows, in any town or village, in any place not being a thoroughfare nor one in the vicinity of a temple or a *mandir* nor one exposed to the gaze of Hindus.

Cows should not be led in procession or in demonstration for sacrifice or slaughter.

Having regard to the deep-rooted sentiment of the Hindu community in the matter of cow-killing, the Muslim community is earnestly appealed to, to conduct the cow sacrifice or slaughter so as not to cause annoyance to, the Hindus of the town or village concerned.

Whenever a complaint is made that any of the provisions of this resolution have been contravened, it shall be enquired into and decided by arbitrators appointed by the Working Committee by name or under general regulations and their decision shall be final.

Efforts at composing communal differences in the past have been handicapped by attempts on the part of one community to impose restrictions on the enjoyment of its rights by the other. The result was that instead of removing mistrust and suspicion and creating respect of each other's religious sentiments the solution generally led to a further intensification of the strife. The resolutions of the All India Congress Committee are based on the recognition of complete freedom of each community to enjoy its rights to minimum restrictions necessary for peaceful corporate social life. The fear of any curtailment of their having been once removed, an appeal to the higher sentiments of the two communities, to their spirit of toleration and

forbearance, is bound to have greater chance of success. It is not impossible that each community may even voluntarily forgo a portion of enjoyment of its rights out of regard for the sentiments and feelings of the other.

The Congress has given a definite lead. It has prescribed a potent remedy to eradicate the communal canker which has been eating into the very vitals of our body politic. It is now for us Congressmen to carry on a vigorous propaganda to explain and popularise these resolutions and to bring them home to the Hindu and Muslim public all over the country. I earnestly appeal to every well-wisher of India, irrespective of his political creed, to lend a helping hand to the Congress in this noble cause. Specially do I appeal to the Press of the country to realise its great responsibility in the matter. There is no other agency which plays such an important part in the moulding of public opinion and the regulation of inter-communal relations. It is the powerful instrument for good or for evil and I regret to say that throughout this unhappy communal crisis, our Press, especially the Vernacular Press, has not exercised its influence for the good. With very few noble exceptions it has actually fanned the flames of conflict and lamentably failed in the discharge of its duties. I cannot have any complaint against the Anglo-Indian newspapers. They naturally serve the interests that maintain them. But is it too much to expect from our own journals and journalists that they will subordinate their selfish considerations to the supreme interest of common national good and ally themselves with forces working for the restoration of concord and amity? The conduct of News Agencies in the country has not been altogether satisfactory either. Let us hope that they too will contribute their share to the restoration and maintenance of unity in the country. Let us all realise that it is a matter of life and death for us and on the success of our efforts to achieve unity in the country depends the whole future of India.

If I have discussed at length the question of Hindu-Muslim differences it is because like the ubiquitous microbe it has infected every sphere of our national activity. I am conscious that the question of Hindu-Muslim relation is only part of the broader problem of the rights of minorities and backward classes. The Sikhs in the North and the non-Brahmans in the South and the so-called Depressed Classes all over India.. equally deserve our close attention. I do not propose to deal at length with the Sikhs or the non-Brahmans, but cannot resist the temptation of putting in a plea on behalf of the millions of "untouchables". The removal of untouchability, although a problem essentially for

Hindu brothers to solve, must still be a matter of the deepest concern to every Indian inasmuch as the presence of such a large section of our fellow-countrymen suffering under grievous social and political disabilities cannot but retard our efforts for the emancipation of our country.

Unity in the Congress

Next in importance to the re-establishment of communal harmony is the question of the reorganisation of the Congress on a wider basis. The setback we received in the non-Cooperation movement told heavily on the Congress. The keen enthusiasm of the palmy days of 1920 and 1921, when every city and every village had a Congress Committee of its own began to cool down and, with the outbreak of communal dissension, gave place to apathy and in cases, fortunately rare, to open hostility to the Congress. The communal question having been settled on the lines of the Bombay and Calcutta resolution measures must be adopted to make the Congress franchise popular and to induce all communities to join the Congress in large numbers. I am glad our non-Brahman friends have decided to come back to us and it gives me great pleasure to see them so well represented here today. It is, however, a matter of deep regret that the number of Muslims and Sikhs has dwindled considerably. The case of the Parsis, who took such a leading part in the early life of the Congress, is worse still. I wish particularly to address the Indian Christians who have so far kept themselves aloof as a body from the Congress. I should like to tell them that if they are under the impression that they can serve the interests of their community by remaining outside the Congress, they should take a lesson from the experiences of my co-religionists. The Mussalmans of India allied themselves with forces other than national for a number of years and after bitter experience found out that they could advance their interests only by joining the Indian National Congress and making common cause with the rest of their countrymen. The Indian Christians will serve their community better by giving up their policy of isolation and adopting an Indian national outlook. I should like to see every section of our people entering into a healthy rivalry to contribute its share to the conduct of national affairs through the Congress. The doors of the Congress should be thrown wide open to all parties and we should stop at nothing short of a surrender of basic principles to bring back every party to the Congress. Differences of opinion are bound to exist but the best and the only place to fight

them out is and should be the common platform of the mother of all political organisations in India, the Indian National Congress. Each party has an unrestricted right and opportunity to convince the Congress of the correctness of its point of view and to enlist the support of the majority for the policy it advocates. If the majority, rightly or wrongly, fails to appreciate the correctness of that policy, until we have found a substitute for the rule of majorities, the only democratic and workable principle is to respect the decision of the majority. This does not mean that the minority loses its right to continue its endeavours to convert itself into the majority. Differences in detail or method should not be made the occasion of secession from the parent organisation and the setting up of a separate party outside. Multiplicity of parties on minor differences is bad enough for countries already free and independent. We, who are fighting for our elemental rights cannot afford to indulge in the luxury of a cramping and complicated system of parties. A great responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Indian intelligentsia whose duty it is to educate the masses to a realisation of their rights and privileges. The confusion caused by the existence of a number of parties leads to distraction and the great work of the uplift of the masses remains neglected. Let us concentrate on the largest common measure of agreement rather than emphasise points of disagreement. After all, the points on which we agree are many and those on which we disagree but few.

Unity in the Councils

I do not believe in the Councils. At the same time I am aware that the Congress has permitted its members, if they so desire, to enter the Councils and a considerable number of my fellow-workers believe that they can render useful service to the country from inside them. To all these I humbly suggest that if they must go to the Councils the least that the country expects of them is that instead of allowing their opponents to take advantage of the division in their ranks they will join forces with other nationalist groups to perform a People's Party of Opposition and present a United front. As it is, on a majority of problems the various nationalist groups have been invariably found in the same lobby. The instructions issued by the Congress for work inside the Councils can form a good basis for unity of action. Should any alterations in these instructions be found necessary to facilitate joint action it is always open to any group to come to the Congress and press its view point. And whatever decision the Congress gives

should be loyally obeyed by all.

The Statutory Commission

"In the good old days" we looked forward with eagerness to the conferring of "boons" by our rulers. Well, Providence in its "merciful dispensation" has conferred upon us a real boon in the shape of the Statutory Commission. The manner in which the declared wishes and sentiments of the Indian people have been contemptuously disregarded should serve as an eye-opener even to the most confirmed optimist among us. It is the strongest and the most convincing plea for the sinking of our differences and closing up of our ranks. Much has been said and written on the Commission but little, as seems to me, which touches the heart of the matter. Keen disappointment and surprise have been expressed at the exclusion of Indians from its personnel. I must confess I do not share any of these feelings. I am neither disappointed nor surprised. It is not a question of the appointment of a Hindu peer, or a Muslim knight, nor is it a question whether Indians should participate in its work as members, assessors or advisers. The principle involved is totally different. It is basic and fundamental. No sane or self-respecting Indian can ever admit the claim of Great Britain to be the sole judge of the measure and time of India's political advance. We alone know our needs and requirements best and ours must be the decisive voice in the determination of our future. It is our inherent and inalienable right. Taking its stand on these principles the Congress has all along advocated the convening of a Round Table Conference of the representatives of India and Great Britain with plenipotentiary powers to decide the bases of the future constitution of India, to be incorporated into an Act of Parliament. It is only on these conditions that Indians can, consistently with national honour and dignity, agree to cooperate. Until Great Britain accepts these terms the Indian National Congress has no other alternative but to ask the people of India to treat Statutory Commission as our Egyptian brothers treated the Milner Mission, and leave it severely alone. We can have no part or lot in a Commission which has been appointed in direct defiance of the declared will of the people of India.

Need for a Constitution

The advent of the Statutory Commission should not divert our attention from the work of framing a constitution for India. The need for it had been felt for a long time and at the Bombay meeting of the All India Congress Committee, the Working Committee was called upon to draw up in consultation with leaders of political thought in the country, a suitable Constitution for India. A Constitution for India of this nature would remove suspense and doubt from the minds of the different communities regarding their position and status in the final political arrangement of the country. I would rally the different political parties round the Congress and prove of incalculable value in the education of the people in their political rights and privileges, telling them in exact language what they are called upon to fight for. Nor can we underrate its value in strengthening our hands generally in our struggle for the achievement of Swaraj.

To frame a constitution for a people consisting of 320 million souls, professing different religions and speaking different languages, will be the most unique and gigantic experiment in democracy ever attempted. The task of the framers will be further complicated by the presence of Indian States exercising sovereign rights in their territories. Whatever be the final form of the constitution, one thing may be said with some degree of certainty, that it will have to be on federal lines providing for a United States of India with existing Indian States as autonomous units of the Federation taking their proper share in the defence of the country, in the regulation of the nation's foreign affairs and other joint and common interests.

As soon as the Draft Constitution is ready the Congress should take steps to call a National Convention consisting of representatives of all interests, communities and political parties to consider it and give it a final shape.

The Detenus

The greatest misfortune that can befall a people is to lose its independence. Patriotism, universally accepted as one of the highest forms of virtue in a free people, is condemned as a vile crime in a subject race. There are very few in the ranks of our public workers who have not, at one time or another, paid the penalty of their patriotic sentiments by being consigned to prison as ordinary felons. It is not possible to give the exact number of victims of lawlessness perpetrated in the name of

peace and order, but taking into account only those sentenced in the Komagata Maru Case, the Martial Law prisoners in the Punjab where boys of 10 and 11 years were condemned to transportation for life for "waging war" against the King, those incarcerated during the days of Non-Cooperation, the Sikhs imprisoned in connection with the Akali movement and the large number of Moplahs punished and deported in 1922, the total swells to the staggering figure of 60,000. These 60,000, however, had the semblance of the trial in Ordinary Courts, Special Tribunals or the Martial Law Courts. The most tragic case is that of the hundreds of unfortunate young men who, for no other crime than the love they bore their country, have been condemned to a lingering death in the prime of their life, without even the mockery of a trial or the framing of a charge, under the provisions of that relic of legal antiquity, Regulation III of 1811, or that cruel weapon of coercion and repression forged in 1925, the Bengal Ordinance, subsequently put on the Statute Book under the dignified appellation of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act, of 1925. The story of the detenus of Bengal reads like a page from the Middle Ages with this difference that while in the Middle Ages the history of the moral consciousness of the world was not so well developed and the standard of civilisation was not so high, the tragedy of Bengal is being enacted in the twentieth century when the sense of justice and moral standards of right and wrong are several centuries in advance of mediævalism and by people who claim to be torch-bearers of civilisation. It is the most damning confession of moral bankruptcy when the Government have not got the courage to bring these young men before their own law courts to be tried by their own judges and in accordance with the laws promulgated by themselves. I warn the Government against the consequences of the bitter conclusions such cruel persecution is bringing into the very soul of the nation. Other governments have tried repression to crush the spirit of freedom and for the result one has only to point to Russia and Ireland. Even the most credulous among us would find it difficult to have any faith in the genuineness of the professed intentions of the Government with regard to the future of India and the high-sounding principles enunciated in that connection when elementary rights of citizenship and liberty of person are so flagrantly violated every day. Restoration to liberty of these young men would be some indication of the advent of a better spirit in the regulation of the relations between India and Great Britain. Our efforts should not be confined merely to the release of these unhappy detenus but a repetition of similar outrage on the inviolable rights of citizenship

in the future should be made impossible by incorporating in the fundamental laws of the country a Declaration of Rights guaranteeing to every citizen liberty of person, liberty of speech, liberty of association and liberty of conscience.

Closely associated with the question of the detenus is the question of Indian nationalists compelled to live in exile in foreign lands. We may disagree with their methods of work in the past but the abnormal conditions, which impelled them to adopt that course of action, have disappeared and there is no longer any reason why they should be denied the right to the country of their birth and to serve it peacefully.

It is not detenus and exiles alone who suffer. Ordinary citizens are being deprived of their freedom of movement and their right of ingress is being tampered with through an ingenious administration of the regulations relating to the grant of passports. Passports have become one more weapon in the hands of the bureaucracy to be used against us. India has been turned into a vast internment camp and a number of Indians abroad have been successfully locked out. Respectable citizens have been prevented from leaving India even for purposes of health, business or travel. It will, perhaps, be difficult to find a more glaring example of the abuse of these regulations than in the cancellation of the passport of Mr. Shapurji Saklatwalla, M. P. Considered worthy of the highest honour and position of trust in England by the suffrage of English citizens, he has been declared unfit to enter the land of his birth. These disabilities must go and the fetters of the prison removed altogether.

India and Asia

The task before us, as I have already pointed out, is to put India on her feet. It goes without saying that we must primarily and mainly depend on our own resources and organisation to solve our problem, but it will greatly facilitate our task if we cease to view our problems as purely local. We have long committed the blunder of looking at them in an exclusively Indian setting. It is time we studied them in their international aspect and took note of every factor in world politics which has a bearing on them. The chief defaulters in this respect have been our Hindu brethren. Perhaps their peculiar social system and the self-sufficiency of the country fostered an outlook of isolation. When the British appeared on the scene they were not slow to take advantage of this spirit of isolation and turn it into a

segregation so full and complete as effectively to cut us off from the rest of the world. So thorough was the blockade that we were kept in utter ignorance of the condition even of our immediate neighbours. The only contact vouchsafed to us was through London and only to the extent that suited the convenience of Great Britain. We saw the world through British glasses.

The Mussalman, no doubt, did, now and then, disturb the placid surface of Indian indifference to developments outside. But his interests in world politics being mainly religious, the current of national thought flowed on as before. Isolation and segregation are no longer possible. Science has annihilated distance and removed barriers. The world has come closer. Events in one part of the world have the immediate repercussions in the other. The inter-dependence of problems in the different countries of the world has changed the entire conception of national politics. We stand to lose considerably if, without diverting our attention from problems at home, we do not take a practical interest in happenings and developments outside. In the conflict between Europe and Asia, Asia has been worsted because Europe could take concerted action against her piecemeal and defeat her in detail. The only hope of success in our efforts to check the forces of European Imperialism and Capitalism lies in Eastern nations coming closer and taking a more intimate interest in the problems facing them. Fortunately we are so placed that a part of our population has cultural affinity with countries in the West of Asia while another has similar relationship with the countries lying in the East of the Continent. Our economic problems are also more or less similar. Common culture and common interest should, therefore, facilitate the consummation of the scheme of an Asiatic Federation adumbrated by that great patriot Deshabandhu Chittarranjan Das, whom nature had endowed with an imagination to which geographical barriers were no obstacles and a vision which encompassed all the races inhabiting Asia.

A happy beginning was made by the Congress in this direction by participating officially in the 'Congress against Imperialism' held at Brussels, and by becoming associated with the 'League against Imperialism'. A more important and practical step taken by the Congress was the proposal of sending a mission to give medical relief and assistance to the people of China in their present struggle. The mission could not go as the Government of India refused to grant passports. The fact that the Government had to shift their ground twice in search of an excuse for the refusal clearly shows that the underlying motive of their decision was other than what was officially expressed. The

plea that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict impartiality to allow a medical mission to go to the assistance of one or the other of the belligerents is certainly novel. It would, perhaps, have been nearer the truth had it been stated that it would be a departure from an attitude of strict partiality. As a matter of fact it is neutrals alone who can send medical relief to belligerents without let or hindrance. Indeed this principle is the *raison d'être* of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society which have rendered help and assistance in the past. When advance the plea the Government forgot that fifteen years ago they themselves had given passports to a similar mission sent to Turkey while Great Britain was neutral. It is futile to lodge protests but such setbacks should not deter us from persevering in our efforts.

Public Health

I have taxed your patience by dwelling at such length on the problem of communal harmony and the unity of political parties for they are of the utmost importance for our national well-being at the present moment. There is, however, another subject which deserves the most serious attention of all those who have the love of India at heart. It might be urged that the problem of National Health, strictly speaking, does not fall within the purview of a political organisation and it is probably for this reason that it has, so far, not received the attention at the hands of the Indian National Congress which it deserves. It has such an important bearing on some of the most vital questions connected with the future of our people as a self-governing nation that I think it is high time the Congress realised its importance in our national economy and directed its attention towards it.

It does not require any great powers of observation to notice that there is a general deterioration in our health which has become specially noticeable during the last fifty years. Without going into any elaborate details a mere comparison between the physique of a young man of the present generation and that of the young men of the past two generations will clearly establish the fact that there has been a steady decline. The men of the past two generations, perhaps less brainy, were comparatively more active, possessed greater power of endurance, were more courageous and less susceptible to disease. The contrast becomes more marked when we compare our level of general health with that of any other country in the west. If we examine the causes of this deficiency they would resolve themselves

into climatic, social, economic, educational and hygienic.

In a tropical climate, where the heat during the greater part of the year is intense, there is greater general relaxation and quicker exhaustion of the system, hence, for the same number of hours of work a man is more fatigued in the tropics than in temperate and colder regions and yet the working day is longer in India than in the West. There being not enough rest or recreation the Indian worker has not much change of recoupment while the drain on the system is kept up from day to day. This has a disastrous effect on the period of average life and on the standard of efficiency.

The evils of our peculiar social system are so well-known that it is not necessary for me to dilate upon them. Every worker in the social cause knows the havoc played by seclusion and segregation of our female population, early marriages and rules confining the choice of marriage to a limited circle. The rigidity of the social rules affecting our domestic life is so cramping that it dwarfs the physical and mental growth of the family and has a particularly harmful influence on children. Nature is relentless in its revenge. If we defy the accepted laws of eugenics our common stock is bound to suffer.

The general economic condition of the workers in the fields and factories, who between themselves constitute more than three-fourths of the total population of the country, is such that it is with difficulty that they can keep body and soul together. They are overworked and underpaid, ill-fed, ill-clothed and badly-housed. Their power of resistance to disease is so low that they fall easy victims to the ravages of epidemics. Cholera, plague, influenza, small-pox and malaria claim their heavy toll of millions year after year.

The growing evil of drink threatens further to undermine not only the public health of the country but our entire social structure. Forbidden by his religion to the Mussalman and held pernicious by the Hindu, the evil of drink would not have spread so rapidly and extensively had the Government taken a sympathetic attitude towards those who were endeavouring to stop it. On the contrary obstacles were placed in the way of national workers who wished to eradicate the evil and hundreds of young men who peacefully picketed liquor shops were sent to jail to pay the penalty of their reforming zeal. The arm of the law was used to "protect" the liberty of the citizen, to intoxicate others and to get intoxicated himself, in order to compensate him for the denial of liberty in the political sphere. Well might India complain "some are born drunkards, others contract the habit and some have drunkenness thrust upon them." The health of the nation may

suffer, crime may increase, efficiency of the peasant and the labourer may decrease, their children may starve but Prohibition cannot be introduced as the deficiency in the budget must be balanced. Is it too much to expect the Government to meet the wishes of the people at least in this matter by finding other means to satisfy the requirements of a balanced budget?

The conditions obtaining among the middle and the lower middle classes cause no less anxiety. With limited incomes and forced to maintain a higher standard of life in cities, where living is comparatively dearer, they suffer great hardship indeed. Their hand-to-mouth existence and consequent malnutrition together with residence in congested, unhealthy areas, make them particularly susceptible to tuberculosis. The appalling figures of infant mortality and deaths during child-birth, both in rural and urban areas, are matters of great concern and deserve our immediate attention.

These evils are aggravated by a lack of proper provision for health and hygiene. There is much room for improvement in our general standard of cleanliness both in relation to the person and the household. Houses should be built with better provisions for ventilation and light and with satisfactory sanitary arrangements. Villages and towns should be planned with due regard to water supply, sanitation and conservancy arrangements. Stricter supervision of food-stuffs and better control of markets in every town and village, however small, is another crying need of the country. Medical relief should be organised on a wider scale. By these methods alone can we bring under control all preventable diseases and eradicate them finally.

The question of public health and hygiene is intimately correlated with that of mass education. Unless the mass-mind is prepared by a process of suitable education it can neither appreciate nor carry out the most elementary and essential reforms affecting the health and happiness of the masses. Our municipalities and Local Boards, in spite of the many restrictions placed on their powers, can still do a great deal to arrest the decline in physique of the people and raise the general level of the health of the nation.

I have so far discussed the question of national health in its relation to our disabilities but making every allowance for them I cannot but deeply regret the general apathy and neglect shown towards the all important question of physical culture. Even well-to-do people, who have both leisure and means, do not take much interest in it. This apathy was perhaps an inevitable result of the complete disarming of the

nation and depriving its talents for military leadership. People were forced to rely on others for the defence of their homes and hearths. A spirit of dependence settled down on the nation. Old *akharas* and gymnasia disappeared and with them the spirit of self-reliance, the very essence of national self-respect. Government shows a nervousness, difficult to appreciate, whenever the question is mooted that this emasculating general disarming of the people be put to an end and Indians given a chance to prepare themselves for the defence of their country. The fear that carrying of arms is likely to disturb the general peace and tranquility, is entirely baseless. There have been fewer breaches of peace in Indian States where there is no Arms Act, than in British India where even sticks beyond regulation size may not be carried. Establishment of gymnasia and centres of physical culture, in fact the entire question of national health, turns on Finance. private efforts, however well-organised, cannot meet the needs of the situation. It is only by devoting a substantial portion of public revenues that such reforms of a real nation-building character can be taken in hand. Sixty per cent of the revenues of India is absorbed by the Military Department in the name of the Defence of the country but the Government ought to know that there can be no defence of the country when people are allowed to exist in such a state of utter physical degeneration. The defence of the country does not lie in building costly blockhouses and erecting fortifications, nor even in procuring expensive armament or the mechanisation of the Army. Money can make trenches but men alone can man them. The real defence of the country lies in tackling the problem of manhood and improving the general health of the nation.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I wish to urge that the country should lose no time in preparing itself for the next move forward. I urge that all our energies and resources be concentrated on fighting the enemy residing inside our body politic, namely, communal and political discord. I beseech Hindus and Mussalmans to accept the settlement of the Congress, which is just and fair to both, and to sink their differences. I press for an immediate and countrywide reorganisation of the Congress and cordially invite all communities and political parties to join the national organisation as a body in order to strengthen it and make it truly representative and national. I appeal to all those who still desire to go to the Councils to close their ranks and form one People's

Party of Opposition on the basis of the Congress Programme. I strongly advise the Congress and the country to stand aside and have nothing whatever to do with the Statutory Commission. I reiterate the demand of the Congress for a Round Table Conference of Indian and British representatives with plenipotentiary powers as the only method in which we could cooperate with Great Britain regarding the settlement of the future of India. I recommend the speedy preparation of the future Constitution of India and the calling of a National Convention for its adoption. I suggest to my people that we should consider Indian problems in their international setting and cultivate cultural relations and maintain friendly contact with Asiatic countries. I call my countrymen not to relax their efforts until they have secured the release of the detenus of Bengal and make repetition of a similar outrage on the elementary rights of citizenship impossible. I draw the attention of the country to the alarming condition of our National Health and earnestly appeal that effective measures be devised to check the causes which are leading to its steady deterioration. These, in my opinion, are the lines on which we can weld India into a nation with an irresistible will and determination to conquer all obstacles in the way of the realisation of its great ideal and occupy its proper place among the Nations of the World.

APPENDIX C

Presidential Address at the All Parties National Convention, Calcutta, 1928.

Brother Delegates of the Indian National Convention,

The All Parties National Convention meets under the shadow of a national bereavement. Lala Lajpat Rai's life was one continuous epic of courageous self-sacrifice in the cause of the country which, fittingly enough, was ultimately crowned with a glory which is the pride of every patriot. The loss to the country and specially to the All Parties Conference which during the closing days of his life, he was serving so efficiently through the membership of the enlarged Nehru Committee, is irreparable. Although he did not live to see the fruition of the work, let us hope that we will prove ourselves worthy of

the departed patriot by completing it here, for this is the best tribute that we, who are delegates to this Convention, can pay to his memory.

We have assembled in this National Convention to take a final decision on behalf of the whole country in regard to India's Constitution in the immediate future as drawn up by the Nehru Committee.

We have had, I am afraid, a little more than enough of discussions regarding the rights of minorities. Such instances can be multiplied to show that there is no unanimous acceptance of all individual recommendations of the Nehru Committee as separate and entirely unrelated entities. But, and this is what I want to stress as earnestly as I can, there are very few people in the country who are opposed, because they disagree with an article here or an article there, to the Constitution as a whole as the next immediate step. This is enough and the authors themselves did not expect anything more. Indeed in my humble view this is the whole justification of the draft constitution.

Looking at the matter from this point of view, I am not surprised that there should have been throughout the country able criticisms and equally able defence of the goal which the Nehru Committee seeks to achieve in the name of all parties, moderate and extremist alike. At one stage there was, I confess, the danger of the controversy taking rather a serious turn. But this danger was promptly warded off, thanks to the patriotism and statesmanship of the leaders of the differing schools of thought. This was to be expected because the Nehru Committee draft, although it deals as it must have dealt by virtue of the very *raison d'être* of the Committee, with the minimum, it has not deprived any body of persons from working for the maximum. That is why, I, at any rate as a member of the Indian National Congress, owing allegiance to its goal of complete national independence, am prepared to give my support to the recommendations. I welcome the minimum in the first place because my own ideal is not thereby lowered, and secondly by doing so I am helping to secure united backing for sanctions that may be devised in order that India may win her freedom.

I appeal to Congressmen who believe in Independence to consider the question in this perspective. By accepting the draft we do not lose anything but we gain much.

Communal Problem

The recommendations regarding the communal problem have been

subjected to a keener examination which is admirable. But they have sometimes aroused in certain quarters protest, which I venture to say, is based on ignorance of the real import of the recommendations and on a confusion of rights of the minorities with the principles of representation. Nobody can deny that the minorities have their rights and that these rights have been protected in other countries of the world. The draft constitution, I will venture to say, gives to the minorities of India more real and solid safeguards than have been granted by the League of Nations to racial minorities of any of the newly-constituted states of Europe. But let us not be the victim of a constitutional fetish.

“True safeguard of a minority”, as a Committee of the League of Nations has recently observed, “is the goodwill of majority”. It is not on privileges that a minority has succeeded in wringing from a majority but on its patriotism, public spirit and devotion to the country that its stakes and welfare depend. Nor must I fail to add a word of warning. Constitutional safeguards are bounties on inefficiency. The more a minority has of them the more will it need, and protected from the bracing spirit of free competition by charitable provisions of constitution, it will sink deeper and deeper into ignorance, fanaticism and sloth to be stifled ultimately by the very cords which had appeared to offer it a partial support. I am unable to understand the mentality which is not satisfied with what the draft constitution has given but would ask for more in a manner as if any denial involved the question of life and death. Let me, however, hope that this is only an exaggerated phase of the natural anxiety which will pass off as discussions in the Convention progress.

Reception of Nehru Committee Report

But as I have said earlier reception of the country to the Report as a whole is very gratifying and encourages me to appeal to you with confidence to support it. It is true that you have been delegated by your organisations to represent their views here and in some cases to suggest what modifications or changes your organisations consider necessary from their own point of view. It is your duty to urge those views here but do not forget that there is also another aspect of your duty. If you have come to this Convention to press your own demands you have also come to accommodate the demands of others. The very fact that it is a gathering of the representatives of all parties holding different views means that the spirit of a sympathetic

compromise is its first and the last postulate. Circumstances compel us to work in this spirit. For if we fail to wreck the Constitution the whole world which is watching us today will consider us a pack of men bankrupt in statesmanship, imagination and earnestness of purpose; and we shall have rightly deserved their opinion. But the seriousness of the consequences will not be limited to the exposure of worthlessness. They are fraught with the danger to the nation itself. Rightly or wrongly Providence has put us, who have assembled here, in such a position that a false step will spell untold sufferings to the country and a right step will lay the foundation of our freedom.

In our loyalty to our group or community let us not forget that we owe a higher allegiance to the country as a whole. Above all let us not forget for one moment that during the ensuing discussions our national patriotism will be on trial. I pray to God that in the interest of the motherland every one of us may be granted courage to give and determination to resist temptation to take. After all what we give here as representatives of a section will come back to us as Indians.

Sacred Task

Brother delegates of the Convention, we will be failing in our duty to our country and to organisations that have sent us here if we do not bring to our sacred task courage and charity of heart which the occasion demands. After several years of utter darkness characterised by the utmost confusion of aims and objects—a darkness in which a spectre of communal differences oppressed us like a terrible nightmare—the work of the Nehru Committee has at last heralded the dawn of a brighter day. You have critics and opponents to the right and to the left, an alien government that attempts to prolong its power by overemphasising and encouraging our religious differences, and a set of communalistic groups who are inspired by the gospel of more bread and butter and prepared to degrade themselves by pandering to the behest of our alien rulers. But let us not exaggerate the importance of their subservient and cliquish wire-pulling. It is on the decision of the National Convention alone that the future of India depends. With our hands here and now we shall plant the sacred tree. We have no reason to be afraid of communalists. Their days are numbered. Already a new generation is coming to the front to which differences between Hindus and Musalmans are unknown and which will not and cannot think in communal terms. Our angle of

vision has rapidly changed. Let us in recognition of this supremely important fact bury our communal differences so deep beneath the earth that they may never rise again. And when this preliminary work has been done, we can proceed to lay the foundations of that democratic edifice within which people of India can live and prosper for ages to come.

APPENDIX D

Concerning Dr. Ansari's House*

DAR-ES-SALAM is Dr. Ansari's residence. The name means House of Salam; also House of Islam. The spirit of Islam is broad enough to justify the name. But the house has its international and universal aspects as well. I was a guest for nearly two months.

Salam House is a huge octagonal building of one storey, overlooking a square lawn. Cars move in and out along two straight parallel drives. A few steps lead up to the marble terrace, which runs the length of the facade. A profusion of red, white, and purple flowers in magenta-red pots are spread about, or twine themselves round the marble columns of the terrace. The Congress flag waves overhead. It is an historical place; but to my mind its present significance is greater than its past. Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin met there on a memorable occasion. At the time, the Parliamentary Board and the Shadow Cabinet also had their meetings there. The ancient, the mediaeval, and the modern came together: the ideas and aspirations of divergent personalities meet, coalesce, and the personalities disperse to set in motion new trends elsewhere. In the free India of the future, that house will be one of the principal landmarks in its marking.

From the walls of the drawing-room the faces of my famous countrymen of 1912 looked down and watched the India of 1935. There were also Afghans and Persian faces of fame. Muslim India has a window which opens not only on the Near and Middle East but on the Far East as well.

In the drawing-room itself were both East and West. Two Englishwomen, delegates to the Women's Conference at Karachi,

*Halide Edib, *Inside India* (London, 1937).

had dropped in to see me. One was Maude Royden, with her fascinating face; and the other Mrs. Corbett Ashby, in her Britannic elegance. Neither were they the only signs of Western interpenetration. The Indians themselves spoke and thought in the same terms as any intellectual bred in Oxford. British domination may end some time; but British influence will remain through the culture and education derived from the English and take part in the future shaping of India.

Dr. Ansari gave me ten days rest to look around before beginning my lectures at Jamia. I had better introduce him first.

He is a U.P. Man. That means something, because Indian intellectuals are divided as to whether U.P. or frontier men will lead India in the future, when the country is independent. To all appearances Indian Independence may not come in Dr. Ansari's lifetime. Nevertheless it is interesting to note what characteristics the future rulers of India are required to possess, according to those who support the U.P. man: these are vision, versatility in thought and ability to organize, I am told. •

Dr. Ansari is descended from men who were distinguished as divines, administrators, warriors, and judges throughout Northern India. If a man inherits ancestral qualities, then Dr. Ansari must have a deep spiritual tendency, organizing ability, and courage, as well as a legal mind. Withal he chose to become a doctor.

He is rooted deep in the Indian soil. His early schooling was in Hyderabad. After winning a scholarship for postgraduate studies in science from Hyderabad University, he went to Edinburgh as a medical student. In his time he was the only Indian to have been admitted as a resident medical officer to Charing Cross Hospital and as House Surgeon to the Lock Hospital. This meant unusual abilities and earnestness of purpose in his profession. It also meant a serious schooling in the scientific methods of the West. Among Muslims he is a rare example of a doctor who has adopted the modern method; for in India the old school of medicine dominates. Dr. Ansari may be considered as bridging the Muslim outlook and Western Science. There are many others now, but he was the first.

In 1910 he settled in Delhi and opened a practice. In 1912 he was drawn away from home by the Balkan Wars. He was the head of the Indian Red Crescent, as I have already mentioned. His visit to Turkey made him again a bridge, this time between the Near East and India. After 1918 he was one of the organizers of the Khilafat movement and one of its strongest supporters. The Khilafat move-

ment may be understood and interpreted in more than one way, but a discussion of it does not belong here. It had, however, two curiously contradictory results in India: that of uniting the Muslims and Hindus around a common activity; and that of dividing them. Dr. Ansari's work belongs to the first. Hence he is a third bridge—that is, one between Muslims and Hindus. This has had a telling effect on his career as a politician. His conception of citizenship is based on equality and cooperation among Indians of conflicting sects and ideas. This has never altered; but it has not been easy to maintain it. He became a target for the slings and arrows of all outraged communalists, Muslim or Hindu. It also brought him into conflict with the reigning Power, and imprisonment was the result. His health, already delicate, was seriously impaired. Nor was this the only hardship he had to bear. Criticism and intrigue in the East has been brought to a fine art of pernicious and insidious subtlety. However, he has earned the respect and confidence of the elite of his country, even of those who do not agree with him. We find him presiding over Conferences qualified as All-India, or Non-Party. In 1935 he was a member of the Shadow Cabinet of the Congress Party. So much for his public and political life. At the same time he continued to practise, and was perhaps among the few famous doctors of India. Most of the great of the land were his patients. Also the poor. There were certain hours he gave to the poor daily, no matter what profit he could have made from those hours. And it was not only the health of the poor for which he gave his time and trouble. No man in need was turned empty-handed from his door.

To get a glimpse of his family life one must lift the curtain of that left-wing apartment opening on to the court opposite my room. Begam Ansari lived there with her personal servants, and her adopted daughter, who was also her niece. She was a Muslim Purdah lady of the best type. She spent her leisure in reading, being a scholar in Arabic, Persian, and Urdu. She was very pious, very charitable. She saw no man other than her relatives, except Mahatma Gandhi. Her attitude towards her servants reminded me of Old Turkey. I would often hear young girls taking lessons from different teachers on the verandah behind the curtain. They were as free and as natural as the daughter of the house. There was no trace of class feeling.

Unfortunately I could not talk with the Begam in a common language. Her daughter interpreted. But I did not feel a stranger to her way of life. I could understand a good many of her Arabic and

Persian quotations, and a little from the Urdu. Her apartment consisted of a vast hall, with rooms opening on to it; and the hall itself opened on to another vast terrace, which was always bathed in brilliant sunlight. In her garden there was a pigeon-house. Beautiful, the pigeons and the doves, and she feeding them. Very Indian.

That side of the house represented Dr. Ansari's Eastern self. The Begam had not shared that Westernizing which was part of her husband's work; but she was tolerant of those who had, and in no way stood in the way of her daughter. That young person was undergoing emancipation by easy stages. She appeared at meals, though only when certain people were present; but she went about freely in her sari, drove a car as daringly as any American girl, and took a keen interest in the affairs of her country, cultural, social, and political. It was a healthy way of preparing a Muslim girl for life, and there would be no greater hurry for women to take a more active part in the country's destiny if present-day India were not facing such tremendous odds. The Indians of today are born to set right a time that is out of joint, the cursed spite of centuries.

It was pleasant to have Zohra initiate me into the ways of a life of a girl of her upbringing. Strangely enough quite a number of her problems as I had already guessed were very much like my own at her age. Her life seemed to be an Indian version of my life at thirty-five years age in Turkey. She was too individualistic to fit into a fixed group, whether inside or outside of Purdah. Seclusion has its drawbacks; but to have one foot behind a veil and another in modern freedom is especially difficult. The respective tempos of Purdah and modern life are "Largo" and "Prestissimo". To dance with one foot to slow music and with the other to quick needs a spiritual acrobat. It has its advantages, too. The girl has the chance to judge and compare; and can always retire and have privacy enough to study.

Zohra's interests were curiously enough like my own—literature and history. They did not only serve to satisfy her intellectual appetite; but also she believed they had lessons for those who are in transitional period. She knew her country's history astoundingly well. In spite of its romantic appeal to her youthful imagination, she did not allow her sentiment to prejudice her judgement. Though a Muslim, perhaps because a Muslim, she had neither the superiority nor the inferiority complex. Above all, she did not feel Muslims to be an alien race, a minority grafted on Indian soil, and doomed to remain as such. She was Indian to the core. Asoka was a part of her

past history just as much as Humayun or Babur. Daily in touch with Jamia professors, I believe she was very much influenced by their points of view.

I used to look forward to her morning visits to my room; and she usually came with me to see whatever was to be seen in Delhi. She both humanized and dramatized for me the great monumental edifices which would otherwise have been only heaps of stones more or less artistically arranged. She knew all the legends around the lives of those who had lived in those ruins.

APPENDIX E

203. From Jawaharlal Nehru*

5.4.1930

My dear Ansari,

Yesterday on my return to Allahabad I received your letter with the copy of the letters to Gandhiji.¹ I fully appreciate what you say about father² and indeed I would be very glad if he could get rest. Physical rest he may perhaps get for some time, but it is beyond my power or any one else's to save him from worry and anxiety. We live in critical times and we must pay the penalty or the price for this privilege. There is going to be no peace for him or for others in India. The whirlwind that we hope will soon descend on our country will either clear this country of slavery and cowardice and usher in a better day or will blow away many of us to the nothingness from where we came. How can any one have peace or quiet when the country is convulsed and is in bitter travail of a new birth. Maybe the child will be still born, but the pains of the mother are nonetheless severe.

* Zakir Husain Collection, Jamia Millia Library, New Delhi.

¹Ansari to Jawaharlal, 13 February 1930, Ansari to Gandhi, 13 February 1930, p. 94.

²See Ansari to Motilal Nehru, 24 February 1930, p. 109.

I am on my way to Gujranawala for a day. I return immediately to Allahabad and soon after start making contraband salt.

Ever Yours,
Jawaharlal

204. From M.K. Gandhi*

7.8.1932

Dear Dr. Ansari,

What a joy to have had such a letter from you. It was thoughtful of you to have sent us the medical report. You have suffered. It is good you are going out for treatment. We all hope you will profit by it and return fully restored to health.

It was equally considerate of you to have given a full report of Jawaharlal's health.

I expect to hear from you regularly.

And now about ourselves. We have all been keeping quite well. I am taking milk. My weight is 105. We are leading a student's life. Sardar gives full 4 hours or more to Sanskrit. He gives nearly two hours to spinning and turns waste paper into envelopes. I learnt only here that he had an eye for neatness and a deft hand. This will be closed in an envelope of his make. So you see he is adding to the wealth of the country. Mahadev is reading. French gives Sanskrit lessons to the Sardar, does my writing work, reads other things and does 3 hours spinning and needful cooking etc. I do over two hours spinning and Urdu. I have read those Jamia publications that were

*Zakir Husain Collection, Jamia Millia Library, New Delhi.

sent to me. And now I am re-reading Shibli's¹ life of the Prophet. I carry on a little Urdu correspondence. One of my correspondents is a girl whom you are reported to know. Her name is Zohra. What a wonderfully good hand she writes. My Urdu teacher is Rehana whom too you know. She is the daughter of our old young friend Abbas Tyabji. She is a brick.

Bon voyage and love from us all.

M.K. Gandhi

¹Shibli Numani (1857-1914); educated in the Islamic branches of learning at Azamgarh, Ghazipur, Rampur, Lahore and Saharanpur; professor of Persian at the M.A.O. College, Aligarh; presided over the first session of the Nadwat-ul-ulama, 1894; resigned from Aligarh in 1899 and joined the Hyderabad Education Department; returned to Azamgarh in 1913 where he founded the *Darul Musannifin*; active in the pan-Islamic movement and wrote poems on the declining fortunes of the Muslim States; member of the central committee of the Anjuman-i-Khuddam-i-Kaaba; published a series of articles in the *Muslim Gazette* in which he argued the case for cooperation with Congress and criticised the Muslim League for pursuing sectional and communal policies; author of a number of books on Islam and on Persian language and literature.

CHRONOLOGY OF PRINCIPAL EVENTS, 1927-1936*

1927

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|----|---------|---|
| 4 | March | Ansari presided over the World Conference of Muslims held in Lucknow. |
| 20 | „ | Thirty prominent Muslims met in Delhi and formulated the 'Delhi Proposals'. |
| 23 | „ | The Punjab Hindu Sabha passed a resolution denying the Indian National Congress any <i>locus standi</i> to represent the Hindus in negotiations with Muslim organisations. |
| 19 | June | Gandhi pressed for the election of Ansari as President of the Indian National Congress because, as he wrote to Sarojini Naidu, 'he alone can pilot a Hindu-Muslim pact through the Congress'. |
| 17 | August | Ansari issued a statement in which he assailed the policy pursued by Congressmen in legislatures and advocated direct action as was done in the non-cooperation days. |
| 30 | „ | A Unity Conference was held in Simla to discuss the communal situation and to discover remedial measures. |
| 27 | October | Srinivasa Iyengar convened a Unity Conference at Calcutta. Resolutions on cow-slaughter and music before mosques were passed. |

*This chronology covers some of the principal events referred to in the Ansari correspondence.

- 28 **October** Ansari moved a resolution at the All-India Congress Committee meeting condemning the 'murderous assaults and riots'. He appealed to Hindus and Muslims to 'do their utmost to create an atmosphere of non-violence in the country'.
- 8 **November** Announcement of the Indian Statutory Commission.
- 10 „ Srinivasa Iyengar, President of the Congress, issued a statement appealing for the complete boycott of the Statutory Commission.
- 29 **December** Death of Hakim Ajmal Khan.
- 30 „ The All-India Muslim League session at Calcutta passed a resolution boycotting the Statutory Commission, adopted the Congress resolution as the basis for inter-communal unity, and disowned the Shafi branch of the League.
- 31 „ Rival session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Lahore under the presidency of Mohammad Shafi.

1928

- 15 **January** The All-Parties Boycott Conference was held at Benaras under the presidency of Ansari. The Conference unanimously decided to boycott the Statutory Commission.
- 12-22 **February** The meetings of the All-Parties Conference were held in Delhi.
- 6 **March** The Council of the Muslim League rejected the formula on joint electorates.

- 8-11 March** Meetings of the All-Parties Conference continued. The sub-committees were appointed to enquire into the financial aspect of the separation of Sind and to consider the feasibility of proportional representation.
- 19 May** Adjourned session of the All-Parties Conference met in Bombay under the presidency of Ansari.
- 15 August** The Nehru Committee Report was published.
- 28 „** An All-Parties Conference was held in Lucknow. Ansari presided.
- 17 November** Death of Lala Lajpat Rai.
- 22 December** The All-Parties National Convention met in Calcutta under the presidency of Ansari.
- 25 „** At the meeting of the All-India Khilafat Conference, Mohammad Ali strongly criticised the Nehru Report and accused Ansari of being a 'mere puppet' in the hands of Motilal Nehru.
- 26 „** The meeting of the Khilafat Committee broke up amidst uproarious scenes. The trouble arose in consequence of the Ali Brothers' 'invading' the session of the Bengal Khilafat with a large following. Twentieth session of the Muslim League met in Calcutta. The Maharaja of Mahmudabad presided.
- 31 „** The Muslim All-Parties Conference was held at Delhi. Among those present were the Aga Khan, Mohammad Ali, Mohammad Shafi, Mohammad Iqbal, Syed Raza Ali, Hasrat Mohani and Maulvi Mohammad Yaqub.

1929

- 7 January** Ansari and a number of other prominent leaders issued a statement protesting against the indiscriminate 'arrests, and torture and tyranny' perpetrated on students and prominent nationalists in the Punjab in connection with the Saunders' murder.

- 3 March Jinnah presented his famous 'Fourteen Points' at the meeting of the All-India Muslim League Council held in Delhi.
- 8 July The 'Congress Muslim Party' was formed in Bombay to carry on a vigorous propaganda in the presidency in support of the national cause and to induce Muslims to join the Congress in large numbers.
- 27 „ A conference of the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party was held at Allahabad under the Chairmanship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- 4 August Maulana Shaukat Ali and the Raja of Salempur organised a meeting with a view to elicit Muslim opinion on the Nehru Report.
- 11 „ Gandhi, Jinnah and the Ali Brothers met in Bombay to resolve their differences over the Nehru Report.
- 31 October The Viceroy announced that a Round Table Conference would be convened after the Simon Commission had submitted its report.
- 1 November Gandhi laid down four conditions before the Viceroy's condition could be accepted.
- 29 December In his presidential address at the Indian National Congress, Jawaharlal advocated complete independence, immediate boycott of legislatures and organisation of peaceful mass movement for no-tax campaign.

1930

- 2 January Ansari and Azad appealed to their co-religionists to 'respond to the historic call of the Congress and join it with cheerful determination to see the National struggle through'.

- 4 January** Death of Mazharul Haque.
- 15 „** Tej Bahadur Sapru initiated a move to organise an All-Parties Conference to resolve the communal problem. 'It is realised', he wrote to Mohammad Ali, 'that one of the most essential conditions of our success is a satisfactory settlement of the communal issue, and it is hoped that if each party approaches the question in a spirit of give and take, a reasonable settlement is by no means impossible.'
- 25** Nawab Ismail Khan, Shafi Daudi and the Ali Brothers urged Muslims not to participate in the Independence demonstration of the Congress.
- 15 February** The Congress Working Committee at Ahmedabad authorized Gandhi and those who believed in non-violence as an article of faith to launch civil disobedience 'as and when they desire and to the extent they decide'.
- 19 „** The All-India Congress Committee adopted the civil disobedience programme.
- 2 March** Gandhi wrote to the Viceroy explaining his reasons for breaking salt law.
- 12 „** Gandhi left for Dandi to break salt law and start civil disobedience. He was accompanied by seventy-eight volunteers.
- 25 April** V. J. Patel resigned from the Presidentship and membership of the Legislative Assembly to join the freedom movement.
- 4 May** Gandhi arrested and taken to Yeravda jail.
- 12 „** The Viceroy announced plans for holding a Round Table Conference in London to discuss India's constitutional problems.

- 20 May Gandhi agreed to suspend civil disobedience if, among other things, the terms of reference of the Round Table Conference included the framing of a constitution giving India the substance of independence.
- 30 June Motilal Nehru, acting Congress President, was arrested at Allahabad.
- 5 July The Executive Board of the All-Parties Muslim Conference rejected the report of the Simon Commission because it 'falls short of our demands formulated by the All-Parties Muslim Conference in Delhi and because it is retrograde and reactionary in spirit'.
- 27 August Ansari and other members of the Congress Working Committee were arrested for holding a meeting in defiance of the official ban.
- 12 September Round Table Conference met in London.
- 1-2 November The Congress Working Committee and some prominent Liberals produced a statement appreciating Irwin's declaration and the government's desire 'to placate Indian opinion', and hoping that they would be able to cooperate in their effort to evolve a scheme of 'Dominion Constitution suitable for India's needs'.
- 16-19 ,, Ansari attended the meetings of the Working Committee where a resolution was passed endorsing the Delhi statement issued on 1-2 November.
- 31 December At the Lahore Congress, Gandhi moved the resolution on Independence and civil disobedience. Motilal Nehru seconded it.

1931

- 4 January Mohammad Ali passed away in London.

- 25 January Gandhi and other members of the Congress Working Committee, including Ansari, were released.
- 6 February Motilal Nehru passed away in Lucknow.
- 4 March Gandhi and the Viceroy reached agreement.
- 30 „ The Karachi Congress endorsed the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and authorised the Mahatma to represent the Congress at the Round Table Conference.
- 18-19 April Meeting of the All-India Nationalist Muslim Party was held in Lucknow. Ali Imam presided.
- 22 „ Ansari declared in a statement that 'joint electorate and adult franchise would form the basis of discussion both with our own co-religionists as well as with the Hindus or Sikhs. Any constitution which does not contain these factors, will be wholly unacceptable to the Nationalist Muslims'.
- 23 May The Maharaja of Mahmudabad passed away.
- 29 August Gandhi sailed for London to attend the Round Table Conference.
- 28 November Plenary session of the Round Table Conference opened.

1932

- 1 January The Congress Working Committee decided to resume civil disobedience.
- 4 „ Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Jawaharlal Nehru and T.A.K. Sherwani arrested. Ansari assumed Presidentship of the Congress.
- 8 „ Ansari arrested in Delhi.

324 CHRONOLOGY

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|-----------|------------------|--|
| 16 | August | The British Prime Minister announced the Communal Award. |
| 12 | September | Gandhi resolved to 'fast unto death' if the Government's decision to give separate electorates for the Depressed classes was not abandoned. |
| 20 | „ | Gandhi commenced his fast unto death. |
| 26 | „ | Fast broken at 5.15 p.m. |
| 29 | October | Death of Ali Imam. In his condolence message, Gandhi described him as 'one of my ablest friends'. |
| 17 | November | The third and last session of the Round Table Conference opened in London. |

1933

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| 10 | January | Ansari and B.C. Roy issued a joint letter inviting comments on their plan to implement the constructive programme outlined in the Poona Conference and later amplified in his statement by Gandhi. |
| 17 | March | The White Paper, containing the British Government's Reform Proposals, was published. |
| 21 | March | Tej Bahadur Saprú described the White Paper as 'a disappointing document'. |
| 27 | „ | The Council of the Bengal Presidency Muslim League and the Joint Conference of the Working Committee of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Hindu members of the Central Legislature condemned the White Paper. |
| 19 | April | Hasan Imam passed away. |
| 8 | May | Gandhi was released from prison. He announced the suspension of civil disobedience. |

- 5 July Ansari urged Gandhi to tour the country with a triple programme of *khadi*, *Harijan* uplift and communal amity.

1934

- 2 February Jinnah criticised the White Paper at a public meeting held at Blavatsky Lodge, Bombay.
- 31 March Ansari, B.C. Roy and some other Congress leaders met at the Dar-us-Salam 'bolted, barred and carefully screened from outsiders'.
- 1 April The meeting at Ansari's residence decided to revive the Swaraj Party. 'I consider it a great brain-wave which brought this idea (revival of the Swaraj Party) to my mind', Ansari wrote to Syed Abdullah Brelvi.
- 2 „ The Muslim League Council, which met under the presidency of Jinnah, adopted the Communal Award.
- 4 „ Ansari, B.C. Roy, and Bhulabhai Desai reached Patna to confer with Gandhi.
- 7 „ Gandhi welcomed the revival of the Swaraj Party.
- 2-3 May About a hundred Congressmen met in Ranchi in order to implement the decisions of the Delhi Conference. Ansari presided.
- 18 May The Congress Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee meetings at Patna accepted Gandhi's advice regarding the suspension of civil disobedience. The All-India Congress Committee appointed a Parliamentary Board with Ansari as President.

- 21 May Ansari appealed to all sections of the Congress and to the entire country to assist the Parliamentary Board.
- 17 June The Working Committee of the Congress decided that it could neither accept nor reject the Communal Award.
- 29 „ The election campaign of the Congress Parliamentary Board was inaugurated in Bombay under the presidentship of Sarojini Naidu.
- July Madan Mohan Malaviya and M.S. Aney resigned from the Congress Parliamentary Board. Azad was elected President of the Board.
- 31 „ Malaviya and Aney formed the Nationalist Party to organise a campaign against the Communal Award and the White Paper.
- 22 November The Report of the Joint Select Committee on Indian Reforms was published.
- 6 December The Congress Working Committee rejected the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report.

1935

- 3 January Gandhi enumerated his objections to the Joint Parliamentary Committee Report.
- 19 „ Gandhi presided over a lecture by Halide Edib at Jamia Millia.
- 23 March T.A.K. Sherwani passed away. According to Jawaharlal Nehru, he was 'a brave, true man, rather limited in outlook as all of us are, but not to be frightened or bullied'.

1936

- 10 'May Ansari passed away. In a statement to the press, Jawaharlal Nehru said : 'Mukhtar Ahmad Ansari has passed away and the nation of which he was a shining ornament and our national movement of which he was so long a strong pillar and a guide feel desolate and shaken. We remember afresh his brilliant gifts and his service to the nation and his sacrifices for the cause of freedom.'

GLOSSARY

- alim* (plural *ulama*) : scholars, learned men, particularly in the Islamic religious sciences.
- amma* (*amman*) : a mother.
- anjuman* : an association, usually of Muslims.
- bazaar* (*bazar*) : a market.
- bhabhi* : a brother's wife.
- bhaiya* : brother.
- dak* : a post; *dak ghar*, a post office.
- dar al-ulum* : 'the abode of sciences'. A Muslim theological seminary such as Firangi Mahal or Deoband.
- farzi* : fictitious, not real or essential.
- fajir* : 'to decline or deviate'; 'to act immorally'; unchaste, sinful, vicious.
- fasiq* : 'to depart from the right way'; disobedient (to God), impious, a transgressor, a fornicator, an adulterer.
- fatwa* : generally a written opinion on a point of Islamic learning given by a *mufti* or an *alim* of standing.
- goonda* (*ghunda*) : a fop, a ridiculous fellow.
- hakim* : a doctor practising one of the orthodox systems of Muslim medicine.
- hajj* : the pilgrimage to Mecca performed in the last month of the Muslim lunar calendar. It is the fifth pillar of Islam, and an incumbent religious duty.
- id al-fitr* : festival at the close of a month's fast in *Ramazan* (see *ramazan*).

<i>id al-azha</i>	: also called <i>id-i-Zuha</i> or <i>Bakr Id</i> , 'The Feast of Sacrifice'.
<i>jamaat</i>	: a body, a group, a congregation for prayers.
<i>Jazirat-ul-Arab</i>	: 'the island of Arabia', the area bounded by the Mediterranean, the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the Tigris and the Euphrates.
<i>Kaaba (Ka'bah)</i>	: the cube-like building in the centre of the mosque at Mecca, which contains the sacred black stone, Al-Hajaru'l-Aswad.
<i>khadi</i>	: hand-spun cloth.
<i>Khalifa</i>	: a successor, a lieutenant; a viceregent or deputy; the successor of the Prophet Muhammad as head of the Muslim community.
<i>Khudai Khidmatgars</i>	: 'Servants of God'; referred to the Red Shirts on the North-West Frontier.
<i>lathi</i>	: cane used by police.
<i>mahatma</i>	: 'a great soul'; applied to men who have transcended the limitations of the flesh and the world.
<i>maulavi (maulvi)</i>	: from <i>maula</i> , 'a lord or master'. A term generally used for a Muslim doctor of law; a professor; a learned man.
<i>mithain</i>	: sweets.
<i>mohalla (mahalla)</i>	: a division, a quarter of a city or town.
<i>pranams (parnam)</i>	: salutation.
<i>pucca</i>	: dressed (opposite to raw); baked (as bricks); cunning, knowing.
<i>qabaristan</i>	: burying ground, graveyard, cemetery.
<i>rais</i>	: an Indian of respectable position.
<i>ramazan</i>	: the ninth month of the Muslim calendar year, which is observed as a strict fast from dawn to sunset of each day in the month.
<i>rasmi</i>	: customary; usage, custom.

- saiyid (Syed)* : descendant of Prophet Muhammad, (especially) a descendant of Husain, the son of Ali and the grandson of Muhammad.
- salaam* : safety, peace, salutation, greeting, compliments; *salaam a-laik* or *salam-alai-kum*. Peace be with you; good morning to you.
- sangathan* : a movement which aimed at unity and the knowledge of self-defence among Hindus.
- satyagraha* : 'possessed by the truth'; commonly used to denote the passive resistance movement launched by M.K. Gandhi.
- shuddhi* : 'purification', the reconversion to Hinduism of those who embraced other faiths.
- swaraj* : Self Rule, Home Rule (*purna swaraj*: complete independence).
- tabligh* : the Muslim conversion movement. .
tanzim 'organisation'. A movement among Muslims which aimed at securing better education and a closer approach to unity among Muslims.
- taqva (taqwa)* : piety, abstinence, the fear of God; *sahib-i-taqva* : pious man, man of piety.
- ulama* : commonly applied to learned doctors in Muslim law and theology, who, by their *fatwa* or decision on questions touching private and public matters of importance, regulate the religious life of the Muslim community.

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